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THE

PRACTICAL WORKS

Of the late REVEREND

ALEXANDER MONCRIEFF

of Culfargie, A. M.

Minister of the Gospel at Abernethy.

WITH TWO TREATISES:

The first in defence of the

SUPREME DEITY of the SON of GOD;

The second being an enquiry into the

PRINCIPLE and END of MORAL ACTIONS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME SECOND.

——*He being dead, yet speaketh*, Heb. xi. 4.

To which are subjoined

TWO SERMONS:

BY

WILLIAM MONCRIEFF,

Minister of the Gospel at ALLOA.

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THE

CONTENTS

Of the SECOND VOLUME.

Page

V. ENGLAND'S ALARM. Which is alſo directed to Scotland and Ireland. In ſeveral diſcourſes. Which contain a warning againſt the great wickedneſs of theſe lands, and of the deſolating judgments approaching upon them. To which are added, ſome papers relative to the ſubject.

EZEK. vii. 2. 15.

[The firſt diſcourſe on this ſubject.]

—*Thus ſaith the Lord God unto the land of Iſrael, An* END. *The end is come upon the four corners of the land.—The ſword is without, and the peſtilence and the famine within. He that is in the field, ſhall die with the ſword; and he that is in the city, famine and peſtilence ſhall devour him.* 1

ISAIAH xvii. 3. 4. 7. with xxxii. 2.

[The ſecond diſcourſe on this ſubject.]

The fortreſs alſo ſhall ceaſe from Ephraim.—And in that day it ſhall come to paſs, that the glory of Jacob ſhall be made thin, and the fatneſs of his fleſh ſhall wax lean. At that day ſhall a man look to his Maker; and his eyes ſhall have reſpect to the holy One of Iſrael.——And a man ſhall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt; as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land. 20

Page

DEUT. xxix. 24. 25. with LEV. xxvi. 23. 25.

[The third discourse on this subject.]

Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt.——And if ye will not be reformed by these things,—I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant. 48

MICAH vi. 16.

[The fourth discourse on this subject.]

For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels, that I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof an hissing: therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people. 74

EZEK. vii. 2. 15.

[The fifth discourse on this subject.]

——Thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel, An END. *The end is come upon the four corners of the land.——The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within. He that is in the field, shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.* 102

To the Practical Works are added,

I. THE proper, true, and supreme Deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, proved and asserted from the holy scriptures. 149

II. AN enquir into the principle, rule, and end of Moral Actions, &c. 261

Page

To which are subjoined,

The two following DISCOURSES,

BY

MR WILLIAM MONCRIEFF,

Minister of the Gospel at Alloa.

A banner displayed because of the truth, matter of praise to all the well-wishers thereof.

PSAL. lx. 4.

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee; that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah. 329

Mercy and judgment displayed, in the effects of a gospel-ministry.

ISAIAH viii. 16.

Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. 377

ENGLAND's ALARM.

Which is also directed to

SCOTLAND AND IRELAND.

In several DISCOURSES *.

Which contain

A WARNING against the great wickedness of these lands, and of the desolating judgments approaching upon them.

To which are added,

Some papers relative to the subject.

EZEK. vii. 2. 15.

—*Thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel, An* END. *The end is come upon the four corners of the land.—The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within. He that is in the field, shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.*

[The first discourse on this subject.]

IT is God's usual method to give warning of his righteous judgments—before he inflict them. In these verses, accordingly, God gives notice and warning to us, in the sinful, apostate, covenant-breaking lands,—of the general desolation that shall

* To these discourses, when first published, was prefixed the following address: "Every sober-thinking man, in comparing present and former times, must be convinced,—that the interest of religion was never so low, in these kingdoms, since the reformation from Popery, as it is at this day.

"And the degeneracy of the age, our defection from the

shortly be brought upon us. This must be declared and published, that all may hear and fear; and may, by this loud alarm, be either brought to faith in the Son of God, with repentance and reformation, or be left inexcusable.

Lord for about an hundred years past, waxing still more corrupt and wicked; the irreligion and infidelity which doth so universally prevail; our contempt of the glorious gospel of Christ; the blasphemous errors and awful delusions which are spreading every where; the increase of Popery and of Jacobitism; together with the immoralities and abominations of all sorts, which so much abound, and that to such an height, that we have outdone the very Heathens themselves: these are such just and evident grounds of the Lord's controversy with us; and are such glaring signs of the day of visitation approaching, that, from the word of God, our perfect and only rule, and from the general rules laid down therein, without prophesying, which is not pretended unto,—we may assuredly conclude, that God's righteous judgments are about to be executed upon us;—if the Lord in his sovereignty interpose not, either in a way of *infinite grace*, —bringing our hearts back to himself, and to our allegiance unto him, which we ardently wish for; or, in his *long-suffering*, bear a little longer with all the indignities done to him, and permit us further to fill up the cup of our trespasses, which is brim-full already;—and thus be more ripened for the sickle of his judgments, and our plagues in righteousness be made still the more wonderful.

"In such circumstances, it appears to be plain duty, to "blow "the trumpet in Zion;" and to "sound an alarm in God's "holy mountain," Joel ii. 1. It is dangerous to neglect to give warning, and dangerous to refuse to take it: For, "if the "watchman—blow not the trumpet, and the people be not "warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among "them;—his blood will God require at the watchman's hand," Ezek. xxxiii. 6. 7. Yet, if the watchman "warn the wicked, "and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked "way, he shall die in his iniquity; but the watchman hath de- "livered his soul," Ezek. iii. 17. 18. 19.

"And taking it under consideration, that the oath of God, which these kingdoms are under,—is both inviolable and mutual;

If we were any way suitably exercised, this message from God would make us say, with the prophet Habakkuk, chap. iii. 2. 16. "I have heard thy "speech, and was afraid.——When I heard, my "belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: "rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled "in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble." ——And with the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 120. "My "flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid "of thy judgments."

This awful message from God was not peculiar to Judah and Israel; but is spoken and directed to us in this generation, as well as it was to them: "For "whatsoever things were written aforetime, were "written for our learning," Rom. xv. 4. And our

and that, particularly, we have vowed to the Most High God, —That "we shall sincerely, really, and constantly, through "the grace of God, endeavour, in our several places and "callings,——the reformation of religion in the kingdoms "of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, "and government, according to the word of God, and the "example of the best reformed churches:" I therefore found myself obliged, especially considering the crisis which matters seem to be coming unto,——to use my weak endeavours for detecting some mistakes, and for exciting all ranks to return unto the Lord, from whom we have so deeply revolted.

"In this undertaking, (for which I acknowledge myself very ill qualified),—I would desire to aim at the glory and honour of God; as also the good and welfare of mankind, which stands inseparably connected with their duty to the Most High. If, upon the account of any essay I have made this way, I shall meet with ridicule and reproach, or other bad treatment, I hope that I shall be enabled, through grace, to forgive the instruments; —and to put my trust and confidence in the great God, our Saviour Jesus Christ. To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, one God,—be glory, honour, power, and dominion, now and for ever. Amen."

bleſſed Lord and Saviour declares, that thoſe things which were ſpoken by God to Moſes at the buſh, were ſpoken to the then generation, who exiſted many ages after the time of Moſes, Matth. xxii. 31. 32. "But as touching the reſurrection of the dead, "have ye not read that which was ſpoken unto you "by God, ſaying, I am the God of Abraham, and "the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob? God "is not the God of the dead, but of the living." God is an infinite Speaker; and, in his word, he ſpeaks to mankind-ſinners, to all generations of men, and to every individual of the human kind, among whom the goſpel-trumpet is ſounded. And it is a certain rule, if the Lord go not out of the ordinary courſe of his dealing with his church,—That when a people, enlightened by the goſpel,—do become univerſally corrupt, and obſtinate in a courſe of ſin, and ſo are guilty of Jeruſalem's abominations, they may certainly expect to meet with Jeruſalem's judgments and deſolation.

The Lord condeſcends to deliver his predictions of awful national calamities, in lively and moſt moving expreſſions; that all ranks may be awakened, and the moſt ſtupid may be affected. The prophet Jeremiah, chap. iv. 7. compares the enemy to a lion that comes up from his thicket, when he is hungry, ſeeking his prey: "The lion is come up from his thicket, and the deſtroyer of the Gentiles is on his way: "he is gone forth from his place to make thy land "deſolate; and thy cities ſhall be laid waſte, without "an inhabitant." And downward in that chapter, the prophet, in name of the Lord, declares, that the deſolation ſhould be general and univerſal; and would be ſuch a deſolation, as ſhould amount in a manner to a diſſolution. He deſcribes the earth as without

form and void, a perfect chaos;—and the heavens as without light, (alluding to the darkness that was upon the face of the deep, Gen. i.). Verf. 20. "Deſtruction upon deſtruction is cried, for the whole "land is ſpoiled." Verf. 17. 18. "Becauſe ſhe hath "been rebellious againſt me, ſaith the Lord. Thy "way and thy doings have procured theſe things un-"to thee." Verf. 22. "For my people is fooliſh, they "have not known me." Verf. 23.—27. "I beheld "the earth, and lo, it was without form and void; "and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld "the mountains, and lo, they trembled.——I be-"held, and lo, there was no man, and all the birds "of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and lo, the "fruitful place was a wilderneſs, and all the cities "thereof were broken down at the preſence of the "Lord, and by his fierce anger. For thus hath the "Lord ſaid, The whole land ſhall be deſolate; yet "will I not make a full end." Verf. 31. "I have "heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the "anguiſh as of her that bringeth forth her firſt child, "the voice of the daughter of Zion; that bewail-"eth herſelf, that ſpreadeth her hands, ſaying, Wo "is me now; for my ſoul is wearied, becauſe of mur-"derers."

And, in the text, the approaching calamity of theſe lands, in a way of warning from the Lord, is held out to us in moving and awakening expreſſions: "Thus ſaith the Lord God unto the land of Iſrael, "An end, the end is come upon the four corners of "the land.——The ſword is without, and the peſti-"lence and the famine within: he that is in the field "ſhall die with the ſword; and he that is in the city, "famine and peſtilence ſhall devour him."

In which words of warning from God, we may observe,

1. The approaching national calamity described. And that, 1. From the lamentable and dismal nature of it: It is "an *end*; The end come upon "the four corners of the land:" All the wickedness and apostasy of these lands, for more than an hundred years past, has been working towards it, as means to bring it about. It is a national ruin and destruction, as the deluge was. "the end of all flesh," Gen. vi. 13. 2. It is an end near at hand, at the very door: "The end is come." These lands have been long ripening for it; it has been long a-coming, long threatened, long deferred; but now, "the end "is come." An impenitent people that hates to be reformed, can expect nothing else;—but that judgments, which have been long put off, shall be inflicted, for the manifestation of divine justice, and of God's holiness, and hatred at sin. 3. The "end" that "is come"—is *universal*. "The end is come "upon the four corners of the land." No part of the land shall escape, no not that which lies most *remote*: for it is the "end of all flesh." 4. These judgments shall be *inevitable*: none of those marked for death shall escape; and those that fall, shall not be lamented. These judgments shall bear down all before them, without remedy, both in town and country. Men shall be safe nowhere: for, "he that is in "the field shall die by the sword;"—every field shall be to them a field of blood; and he that is in the city, shall not be protected; but "famine and pesti-"lence shall devour him." Sin hath abounded both in city and country, and therefore in both desolations shall be made.

2. We may notice the perſons againſt whom theſe awful judgments are denounced: "Thus ſaith the "Lord God unto the land of Iſrael." It is a national calamity; a calamity ſent by God upon the "land of Iſrael:" a land enlightened by divine revelation, and the light of the goſpel, as theſe lands have been; a land that had, by profeſſion, devoted themſelves to the Lord, and had avouched the "Lord "to be their God,"—and had ſolemnly ſworn, in the ſtrength of his grace, to keep his righteous judgments; as theſe lands of England, Scotland, and Ireland, have done, in our Covenants National and Solemn League;—and are juſtly obnoxious to his righteous judgments; becauſe we, as well as they, have dealt falſely and perfidiouſly in his covenant.

3. We ought, with attention and veneration, to obſerve the infinitely holy and righteous author of thoſe deſolating judgments upon theſe lands, whoſe treſpaſſes are grown up unto the heavens: "Thus "ſaith the Lord God unto the land of Iſrael." It is the Lord Jehovah who hath given ſentence againſt theſe lands: and the Lord God doth, by his word, publiſh and intimate the ſentence. The Lord God ſaith it; and who can gainſay what he ſaith? His name is faithful and true. He is faithful in executing his threatenings, as well as in performing his promiſes. Let us therefore tremble at the words of the God of Iſrael, ſo as to be ſhaken out of all carnal confidences; and, by grace, betake ourſelves to the Lord himſelf, as our God in Chriſt's title and right, who is "the hope of Iſrael, and the ſaviour "thereof in time of trouble."

From theſe words, thus explained, we take notice of the following practical note or obſervation, *viz.*

"THAT the Lord, in this his word, doth iſſue forth a warning, and doth publiſh it to the preſent generation,—That his holy, righteous, and deſolating judgments, which, through divine long-ſuffering, have been long deferred, are now approaching, and are at the very door."

HAD we a voice which could be heard through England, Scotland, and Ireland,—we would, through grace, lift it up like a trumpet, and cry aloud to all ranks, to court and country,—proclaiming, with a trembling and grieved heart, "Thus ſaith the Lord "God unto the land of Iſrael, An end, the end is "come upon the four corners of the land. The "ſword is without, and the peſtilence and the fa"mine within: he that is in the field, ſhall die with "the ſword; and he that is in the city, famine and "peſtilence ſhall devour him."

WE in theſe lands have wickedly, in face of goſpel-light, taken our time of ſinning; and God's time of puniſhing, for vindicating his own honour and declarative glory, is now come. Seeing we have refuſed to make an end of ſinning, God is about to make an end of us, and to dung theſe lands with our carcaſes; becauſe the earth is defiled under us, who have changed the ordinances, and broken the everlaſting covenant. Although we do not venture to draw poſitive inferences from ſcripture-warnings, as prophetical, juſt to this preſent time; yet, as it is a time of awful ſinning, with very threatening appearances of correſpondent judgments,—there is great reaſon to fear that the day of viſitation is very near.

THE method we propoſe, is, by divine aſſiſtance,

1. To notice a few of the ſigns of the near approach of a national calamity upon theſe lands.

2. To speak a little of the awfulness of these judgments, as being "an end; the end that is come up-"on the four corners of the land."

First then, we proceed, by divine assistance, to mention a few of the many signs and evidences which appear in our days, of an alarming and nigh approach of a national visitation upon these lands, for the sins of those who dwell therein. And,

I. It is evident, that a flood of profaneness and wickedness overspreads these lands; which is a plain sign and indication of the approach of desolating judgments. Gen. vi. 5. "And God saw that the "wickedness of man was great in the earth, and "that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart "was only evil continually." Vers. 7. "And the "Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have crea-"ted, from the face of the earth." Contempt of the holy scriptures, and a profane mocking at the mysteries of religion, obtains among persons of all ranks. These lands are defiled with murders, drunkenness, open adulteries, and uncleanness of all sorts. The profane entertainments of the stage, masquerades, and other such seminaries of lewdness and lasciviousness, are countenanced and encouraged. The name of God is profaned, by rash and ordinary swearing in conversation; and by perjury and false swearing, particularly in trade and commerce. The Lord's day is many ways most impiously profaned. Men seem to have forgotten that they are accountable to God for all their actions, and must very soon appear before his awful tribunal.

God hath reserved the unjust to be punished;

"chiefly them who walk after the flesh, in the lust "of uncleanness," 2 Pet. ii. 9. 10. It is too manifest, that the wickedness of Jerusalem doth take place in these lands; they must therefore expect to meet with the same desolating judgments: Jer. v. 7. 8. 9. "How shall I pardon thee for this?——When "I had fed them to the full, they then committed "adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the "harlots houses. They were as fed horses in the "morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's "wife. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the "Lord: and shall not my soul be avenged on such "a nation as this?"

Sin and wickedness have come to an amazing height; when there is too much ground to fear, that, in many instances, these lands are defiled with such abominations as the Canaanites are charged with, whom the Lord did cast out and destroy, for their wickedness: Lev. xviii. 24. 25. 26. 28. "Defile not yourselves in any of these things: for in "all these, the nations are defiled which I cast out before you. And the land is defiled: therefore I "do visit the iniquity thereof upon it; and the "land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye shall "therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and "shall not commit any of these abominations:—— "that the land spue not you out also, when ye defile "it, as it spued out the nations that were before "you."

The Christian-sabbath is an inestimable blessing to the church of Christ, a pledge of God's infinite love; and a mean, by the divine blessing, in the holy and pious observation thereof, to ripen the heirs of pro-

miſe for the everlaſting Sabbath. But it is awfully profaned in city and country, againſt the expreſs command of God: Exod. xx. 8. 9. *&c.* "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy." Which impiety is followed by God's judgments upon a ſinful land: Jer. xvii. 22. 23. 27. "Hallow ye the "Sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers. But "they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear.—— "But if you will not hearken unto me, to hallow the "Sabbath-day;——then will I kindle a fire,—— "and it ſhall devour the palaces of Jeruſalem, and it "ſhall not be quenched." In the deſolation approaching, we may be aſſured,—that Sabbath-breaking, and other of our abominations, ſhall ſet cities on fire, and country-villages, which ſhall not be quenched, but by reducing the whole, or greater part, to aſhes.

THE holy name of God is moſt impiouſly profaned, by raſh and cuſtomary ſwearing, and by falſe ſwearing: and the Lord will viſit for theſe things; for "he will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his "name in vain." "Becauſe of ſwearing, the land "mourneth," Jer. xxiii. 10.

II. IT is an evidence of approaching deſolation upon theſe lands,—that thoſe ſpecial evils and abominations prevail, which God, in his word, doth awfully threaten,—as land-deſtroying ſins; ſuch as idolatry, in the growth of Popery, and toleration of the maſs in many places; the corrupting of the worſhip of God, by the groſs ſuperſtition that obtains in the church of England, and in many places of Scotland; perjury, and covenant-breaking,—("ſhall "they break my covenant, and eſcape? ſaith the "Lord," Ezek. xvii. 15.); as alſo wicked depart-

ing from the Lord and his way, (for which the land shall be desolate, Jer. ix. 11. 12. 13.); and blood-guiltiness, which the earth shall not cover. Manasseh shed blood in Jerusalem, which the Lord would not pardon, without making his terrible judgments to pass through the land: and the cries of the souls persecuted in England and Scotland, for the Lord's cause, are now ascending,—that the Lord may avenge their blood upon the men that dwell upon the earth; who are approving of all that their fathers have done, in the wicked course which they themselves are taking,—and in their vilifying all those sacred vows to the Most High God, which we are all under; the obligation whereof is indissolvable, what cannot be loosed by all created beings.

Though much is often passed here, and laid over to the last and great judgment; yet upon such sins the Lord hath put some marks of his displeasure, even in this life, and hath not wholly deferred them to another world: as appears in the holy scriptures of truth,—which shew, that, for such abominations, the Lord useth to contend before the sun, and in the view of the world; so that men, with astonishment, have enquired, "Why is all this come to pass? To which it has been answered, "Because they did forsake the Lord God of their fathers, and served other gods."

III. It is an evidence of approaching desolation upon these lands,—that the threatenings of the word, as to the day and time of visitation upon an apostate land and generation, do point out the days we live in,—as the time of God's righteous judgments approaching to us, 1 Thess. ii. 16. Rev. xiv. 15. 18. Like unto the cup of the Amorites, our cup of sins

and abominations is now near full; and when the cup is full, the Lord will not delay the execution of his awful judgments upon a wicked generation, that hates to be reformed.

STRANGE and unusual wickedness doth prevail; but strange and unusual sinning useth to be followed with some strange stroke and judgment. These lands are come to an extraordinary growth and height of sin. There is a national and universal spreading thereof;—together with prodigious outbreakings of it, and the utter rejecting of reproof; which shew, that our case is upon some dreadful turn. Our sin is become so daring, that it hath a loud cry; and must justify the Lord's procedure against us, in the consciences of all those that shall behold and witness the execution of God's judgments, against a people laden with iniquity: concerning whom, the Lord doth, in righteousness, pronounce this sentence,—"Ah, I will "ease me of mine adversaries; I will avenge me of "mine enemies!"

IV. IT is an evidence of approaching desolation upon these lands, that the gospel of the Son of God is contemned. For unbelief, the Jews were broken off and rejected; and infidelity never had such a run in these lands, in any age, as at the present time. Not only is Christ not received into the hearts of men, with faith's uptakings and discerning of the infinite glory of his person, as Emmanuel, God with us; esteem and adoration of him, as the great God our Saviour; confidence in him, as JEHOVAH our righteousness; and dependence upon him, as our sanctifying head. But the name of Jesus, whose name is WONDERFUL, a name above every name, is blasphemously scoffed at; which sheweth that our judgment

lingereth not, and that the ſhadows of our evening are ſtretching out. It may cauſe the profane ſcoffers of the age to tremble, that becauſe they received not the truth, the goſpel of the grace of God, in the love of it, "that they might be ſaved, God hath ſent "them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould believe a lie; "that they all might be damned, who believed not "the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs," 2 Theſſ. ii. 10. 11. 12. What a monſtrous deluſion is the creed of the Infidels and Atheiſts of this day! To believe that there is no future ſtate, that there is not a God who judgeth in the earth, before whoſe tribunal all mankind muſt appear, is to pretend to believe what is quite impoſſible to be believed. The light of conſcience within man, and the evidence from the works of God without man, as alſo the light that beams forth from divine revelation in a land enlightened by it, do ſo confound Atheiſts and Infidels, that it is impracticable for them to get the leaſt ſtayed perſuaſion of the incredible articles of their monſtrous creed. All their wicked and helliſh eſſays, by their pens, to propagate infidelity, only ſpring from their abſurd and irrational diſpoſition, to gratify their brutal luſts, or to cheriſh their pride, and to manifeſt their enmity againſt God himſelf, the author of their being. And nothing can be ſeen by all their profane and heaven-daring writings, but that they are ſuch a wicked and abandoned ſort of men, as wiſh that God were not; though at the ſame time it is impoſſible for them not to believe that he is. And as they are enemies to God, ſo are they to their fellow-men; while they are moſt active to lead as many as they can to the ſame condition of eternal perdition with themſelves; endeavouring alſo to break the very bonds, and cut the nerves of all order in human ſociety: and thus their endeavours iſſue in no-

thing elſe, but to make others, as well as themſelves, moſt miſerable, both in this world, and in the world to come!

V. CARNAL ſecurity is a ſign and evidence of approaching deſolating judgments upon a land and people. Thus, in the old world, they planted, they builded, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, diſregarding all the warnings which had been given them. "For when they ſhall ſay, Peace and ſafety; "then ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them, as tra- "vail upon a woman with child; and they ſhall not "eſcape," 1 Theſſ. v. 3.

VI. CARNAL confidence is another harbinger of deſolating judgments upon a people: Jer. xvii. 5. 6. "Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and ma- "keth fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from "the Lord." Zedekiah, and the men of Judah, made Pharaoh's army their confidence; as we do our armies, navies, and alliances, at this day: but theſe will do no ſervice in the day of the Lord's controverſy with theſe apoſtate lands: Jer. xxxvii. 7. 9. 10. "Thus ſaith the Lord, Deceive not yourſelves, ſay- "ing, The Chaldeans ſhall ſurely depart from us: "for they ſhall not depart. Pharaoh's army which "is come forth to help you, ſhall return into their "own land. For though ye had ſmitten the whole "army of the Chaldeans, and there remained but "wounded men among them, yet ſhould they riſe "up every man in his tent, and burn this city with "fire."

VII. WHEN God's worſhip is mixed and corrupted with mens inventions, it is a ſure ſign and forerunner of a national calamity; as is the caſe in the

church of England at this day; their worship, in a vast many instances, symbolizing with the superstition and idolatry of the church of Rome. It is said, Psal. cvi. 39. 40. 41. "That they went a-whoring with "their own inventions;" and this so inflamed the wrath of God, who is jealous of his own honour and glory, "that he abhorred his own inheritance, and "gave them into the hand of the Heathen; and they "that hated them, ruled over them." And "in vain "they do worship me," saith the Lord, "teaching "for doctrines the commandments of men." Upon this account, God's professing people became the generation of his wrath: and can this land expect to escape? No; God's threatened judgments against superstition and idolatry, will certainly be accomplished, if we are not enabled, by grace, to believe in the Son of God, and to return unto the Lord, from whom we have so deeply revolted. The threatening is awful: Jer. vii. 29. 30. 32. 33. 34. "Take "up a lamentation on high places; for the Lord hath "rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath. "For the children of Judah have done evil in my "sight, saith the Lord: they have set their abomi-"nations in the house which is called by my name, "to pollute it. Therefore behold, the days come, "saith the Lord, that the carcases of this people shall "be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the "beasts of the earth. Then will I cause to cease "from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Je-"rusalem, the voice of mirth and the voice of glad-"ness; for the land shall be desolate."

VIII. The divisions and mutual animosities that obtain among us, do evidently shew judgment to be at the door: Hos. ix. 7. "The days of visitation "are come; Israel shall know it: the prophet is a

" fool; the ſpiritual man is mad, for the multitude " of thine iniquity, and the great hatred."

IX. The decay of the life and power of godlineſs among profeſſors of religion, Hoſ. iv. 18. Matth. xxv. 5. 6. with the ſtupidity and ſenſeleſſneſs of God's hand that univerſally prevails, do plainly foreſhew ruin and deſolation approaching: Iſ. xlii. 24. 25. and xxvi. 11. " Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they " will not ſee: but they ſhall ſee, and be aſhamed " for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine " enemies ſhall devour them."

X. The perſecution of God's faithful miniſters and people, is another forerunning ſign of our ruin and deſolation: 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. " They mock- " ed the meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his words, " and miſuſed his prophets, until the wrath of the " Lord aroſe againſt his people, till there was no re- " medy." What bloody perſecution has been in England and Scotland, for adhering to our vows and covenant-engagements to the Moſt High God, and for refuſing to comply with Prelacy, and Engliſh Popiſh ceremonies, is known from the hiſtories of thoſe times: and there is a cry from the ſouls under the altar, which were ſlain for the word of God, and for the teſtimony which they held, ſaying, " How " long, O Lord, holy and true, doſt thou not judge " and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the " earth?" Rev. vi. 9. 10. 11. This cry will be heard and anſwered, in bringing down the kingdom of Satan; as alſo in an awful reckoning with, and retribution to perſecutors and oppoſers of the Lord's work and cauſe. The circumſtances of thoſe witneſſes for God, and the purity of his worſhip, were ſimilar unto the caſe of thoſe who lived in Iſrael,

when corruptions prevailed. There were some among them that desired to worship God, according to his own prescription, in Jerusalem; but there were informers set by the priests, upon Mizpah and Tabor, places in the way to Zion, to intercept them: and this foreboded the judgments of God upon that nation; which were executed against all ranks, as the corruption and apostasy became national and universal. And if these lands are not brought, by sovereign grace, to give glory to the Lord, by faith in the Son of God, gospel-humiliation, and reformation, they may be assured that an inundation of God's judgments shall overflow these lands, as it did Ephraim and the land of Israel of old:- Hos. v. 1. 8. 9. "Hear "ye this, O priests, and hearken, ye house of Is- "rael, and give ye ear, O house of the king; "for judgment is toward you, because ye have "been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread up- "on Tabor. Blow ye the trumpet in Ramah. "Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke: "among the tribes of Israel have I made known "that which shall surely be."

XI. INCORRIGIBLE obstinacy, refusing and hating to be reformed by lesser judgments, is a glaring sign of desolating judgments being at the very door: Ezek. xxiv. 9. 13. 14. "Therefore thus saith the "Lord God, Wo to the bloody city; I will even "make the pile for fire great. In thy filthiness is "lewdness. Because I have purged thee, and thou "wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from "thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury "to rest upon thee. I the Lord have spoken it; it "shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not go "back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent."

THESE covenant-breaking lands have done all in

their power to reſcind thoſe ſacred oaths to the Moſt High God; which, containing nothing in them but moral duties, are of perpetual obligation. They have enacted and ſworn many oaths contradictory unto them, both in the preſent and former generation. They trampled upon, and ignominiouſly burnt our covenants, in the principal cities of theſe kingdoms: but God ſent a devouring fire into both thoſe cities, and did viſit them by the peſtilence. He made the ſtink of our camps to come up into our noſtrils, by ſending a bloody ſword among us, in the years 1715 and 1745: yet we have not returned to the Lord, but are become more corrupt and wicked every day: which is a certain indication of approaching deſolations: Amos iv. 6.—12.—— "Your young men have I ſlain with the ſword;—— "and I have made the ſtink of your camps to come "up unto your noſtrils: yet have ye not returned "unto me, ſaith the Lord." Wherefore an awful and a nameleſs judgment is denounced: "Therefore "thus will I do unto thee, O Iſrael; and becauſe I "will do this unto thee," (*i. e.* bring upon thee a deſolating ſtroke), "prepare to meet thy God, O Iſ-"rael."——Religion was never in ſuch low circumſtances, ſince the reformation, as it is at this day, in theſe lands. "Both prophet and prieſt are profane; "yea, in my houſe have I found their wickedneſs, "ſaith the Lord," Jer. xxiii. 11. The land is full of adulterers.—A public ſpirit, to act for religon, and the national intereſt, is gone;—which is ſucceeded by a ſordid ſelfiſh ſpirit. Atheiſm, Infidelity, luxury, and immoralities of all ſorts, are arrived at the moſt amazing height,—without being controulled, or oppoſed by any authority whatſoever; and our cup, like that of the Amorites, being full,—the Lord ſeems to be about to paſs ſentence againſt us. "Ah, I will eaſe me of mine adverſaries, and a-

"venge me of mine enemies!" Jf. i. 24. "Shall I "not visit for these things? saith the Lord: and "shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as "this? And I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a "den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Ju-"dah desolate, without an inhabitant," Jer. v. 9. and ix. 9. 11.

EZEK. vii. 2. 15.

——*Thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel, An* END. *The end is come upon the four corners of the land.——The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within. He that is in the field, shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.*

ISAIAH xvii. 3. 4. 7.

The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim.—And in that day it shall come to pass, that the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean. At that day shall a man look to his Maker; and his eyes shall have respect to the holy One of Israel.

ISAIAH xxxii. 2.

And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

[The second discourse on this subject.]

AS the Lord, in his holiness, doth send desolating judgments upon a corrupt and wicked generation that hate to be reformed; so he warns

them before he ſmites them. Thus when the flood was to come upon the old world, he gave them warning of it, Gen. vi. 3. 1 Pet. iii. 19.

And as there were premonitions of approaching judgments, by revelation to the prophets of old; ſo there ſtill are ſtanding and ordinary rules, by which we may be admoniſhed of God's judgments, before they come upon us.

And the general rule, by which men may diſcern the indignation of God before it comes, is this: When the ſame provocations and evils are found in one nation, which have brought down the wrath of God upon another nation. This is an evident ſign of God's judgments being at the door.

If we ſhall compare the abominations of the preſent age and generation, with the ſins and evils of other nations recorded in ſcripture, which brought the wrath of God upon them to the uttermoſt, it will be found, that, conſidering the clear light of the goſpel which we have been privileged with, our wickedneſs is great on the earth, and reacheth up to the very heavens;—exceeding the abominations of the very Heathen nations. This will appear, from the particulars hinted at in the former diſcourſe, and from ſome others, by divine aſſiſtance, yet to be mentioned.

Let us conſider that God is unchangeably juſt and holy, and will not favour that in one people, which he hath puniſhed in another: and therefore that which hath been a ſign of judgment to one, muſt be ſo to all.

God doth premonish us of the judgments that are coming upon us, not only to leave the careless inexcusable, but likewise for exciting us to act faith upon the Son of God, the Saviour of the world; and to essay gospel-humiliation, with reformation; that so the wrath of God might be turned away from us, we being returned to our duty and allegiance to the Lord. Thus, God's design in sending Jonah to Nineveh, was to excite them to repentance, and prevent their ruin. And he gives warning to us, that, in a prospect of approaching trials, we may, through grace, be prepared for them, and not be amazed at, and unprovided for them; imitating the example of Noah, who, "by faith, being warned of God, of "things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared "an ark," Heb. xi. 7.

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, is this living *Ark* of Heaven, where only we can be safe from the deluge of the vindictive wrath of God; where only you can have a sanctuary and an hiding-place, in these evil days of sinful defection and apostasy, and in the awful days of approaching desolation, or of a national calamity.

And therefore, leaving some things afterwards to be added, by divine assistance, concerning the awful signs of these times, we shall at present, as directed of the Lord, endeavour to excite you to fly for refuge to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is "the "true God and eternal life,—God manifested in the "flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached "unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received "up into glory;" and who is Emmanuel, "God "with us," 1 John v. 20. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Matth. i. 23.

If ye consider the signs of the times, ye may see evil approaching; and ye need not only to see it, but to foresee it, so as, through grace, to be prepared for it. "A prudent man," a man who is taught of God, "foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but "the simple pass on, and are punished," Prov. xxii. 3.

Ye may see, and be assured of it, that an holy and just God will not continue to bear still with the infinite indignities which are done to him. No: for, in the text, the Lord hath denounced it, that "the "fortress shall depart from Ephraim,"—a corrupt, sinful generation, who refused to be reclaimed and reformed; and "the glory of Jacob shall be made "thin." These lands pride themselves, and glory in their numbers, their navies and armies: but this glory will soon wither before a blast of God's judgments: this "glory shall be made thin," when many are cut off, and few left; when the slain of the Lord shall be many;—and when Christ, with his rod of iron, shall dash these nations in pieces, for refusing to submit to the sceptre of his word of grace;—and shall fill the places with the dead bodies, and wound the heads over many countries;—and make the flood of his judgments overflow every corner of these lands, which have been defiled by the wickedness and impiety of the generation, Psal. ii. 9. and cx. 6.

And as faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will be the most necessary and seasonable exercise in that day of calamity; so it is the best preparative for it: "At "that day shall a man look to his Maker; and his "eyes shall have respect to the holy One of Israel." This duty is pointed out to us by the text, in the form of a promise,—that we may be both excited

and encouraged to believe on the Son of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is one God with the Father and the Holy Ghost, as he is our Redeemer, so he is our Maker and Creator: For "in the beginning was "the Word, and the Word was with God, and the "Word was God. All things were made by him; "and without him was not any thing made that was "made.—Yet the Word was made flesh, and dwelt a-"mong us; (and we beheld his glory, the glory as "of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace "and truth," John i. 1. 3. 14. And "by him were "all things created that are in heaven, and that are "in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be "thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: "all things were created by him, and for him," Col. i. 16.

And as the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, by an eternal, necessary, and ineffable generation, became the Son of man in his incarnation, and is God-man, Emmanuel, "God with us," having assumed our nature into an hypostatical union with his divine person; so his church and people are all joined to, and united with him in a mystical union, most real, intimate, and indissoluble, by the Holy Spirit working faith in them, and uniting them to Christ, who is God their Saviour and Redeemer: which union is exhibited to our view, as by other figures and resemblances, so by the marriage-union, Is. liv. v. "Thy Maker is thine husband, (the Lord "of hosts is his name), and thy Redeemer the holy "One of Israel: The God of the whole earth shall "he be called."

There is grace, then, in this promise, for enabling you, in a way of trusting in a promising God, to look

off from all your self-righteousness, legal performances, and creature-confidences; and for determining you to faith's confidence in Christ alone, that ye may enjoy his righteousness, for your justification, and his Holy Spirit, for your sanctification; as he is God your Maker, who giveth songs in the night; and who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.

In the way of looking to him, and trusting in him, ye may be assured that he shall be for a *sanctuary* to you in present times, in the worst of times, and at a dying time, when your souls are departing out of your bodies, to give an account of yourselves to God, the Judge of all; as appears from the other text marked, Is. xxxii. 2. "And a man," the God-man, Emmanuel, "shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, "and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in "a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in "a weary land."

When storms of guilt and wrath beset us, the conscience being awakened by a convincing work of the Spirit of God, the blessed design is to drive us to Christ, that we may be hid under the covert of his righteousness. And when the greatest evils befal us; when the storm, and tempest of personal trials, or of a public calamity, beats upon us, in the way of believing upon the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, we shall be safe, and be protected; that these floods shall not overwhelm our souls, nor shall we be left to sink under the trial, to our own confusion, and God's dishonour.

We now proceed to a twofold exhortation, founded upon these words, thus explained, *viz.* 1. We ex-

hort all and every one of you to look to your Maker, to the holy One of Israel, your Saviour and Redeemer. 2. We exhort you to fly for refuge unto Christ, by the particular application of faith; and to take sanctuary in him, who is the "hiding-place from the "wind," before the decree bring forth, before the tempest beat upon you, and overwhelm you in the depths of eternal misery and woe. And,

Exhort. 1. We exhort all and every one of you to look to your Maker, to the holy One of Israel, your Saviour and Redeemer.

Many of you are ignorant of him, and unacquainted with him. We say to you, as Philip said to Nathaniel, "Come and see," John i. 46. Come and see Jesus, the Son of God, the King of Israel, the Desire of all nations, the Plant of renown. "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: "thereby good shall come unto thee," Job xxii. 21. Be at peace, by your being reconciled to God through the "death of his Son; who being the "brightness of his glory, and the express image of "his person, and upholding all things by the word "of his power,—when he had by himself purged "our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," Heb. i. 3.

Many of you live a wicked and dissolute life, in uncleanness, in profaning the Lord's day, in contemning all the ordinances of God's worship, and in scandalous oaths and imprecations; in drunkenness, riot, and excess; preferring your bodies to your souls, and time to eternity. Many of you, and even such as move in an higher sphere than others,

and ought to be a good example to their inferiors, —are among the ſcoffers in theſe laſt days, walking after your own luſts, 2 Pet. iii. 3. ridiculing all the doctrines and articles relating to religion, and your eternal ſalvation; attacking the goſpel, and condemning the whole,—as ſuperſtition, enthuſiaſm, and prieſt-craft; in the mean time demonſtrating to the world, by your licentious lives, that one great ſpring of your hatred to the light of the goſpel is this, that you are "lovers of pleaſures more than "lovers of God," 2 Tim. iii. 2. 4.

But "Be ye not mockers, leſt your bands be "made ſtrong: fools make a mock of ſin:" and know, that "judgments are prepared for ſcorners, "and ſtripes for the back of fools," Iſ. xxviii. 22. Prov. xiv. 9. and xix. 29.

When Atheiſm, Infidelity, and corruption in morals, are come to ſuch an awful height, it muſt be amazing and afflicting to all ſober-thinking men: it being a time when God is infinitely diſhonoured, the ſouls of men are ruined;—and the plaineſt indication is given, that the Lord is about to viſit for theſe things, and to be avenged on ſuch a nation as this.

But, in the midſt of theſe perplexities, we are to "remember the words which were ſpoken before of "the apoſtles of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; how they "told us, that there ſhould be mockers in the laſt "time, who ſhould walk after their own ungodly "luſts," Jude 17. 18. And let us tremble, in reflecting upon the awful prophecy of Enoch, the ſeventh from Adam, ſaying,—"Behold, the Lord co-"meth with ten thouſands of his ſaints, to execute "judgment upon all, and to convince all that are

" ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, " which they have ungodly committed, and of all " their hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have " ſpoken againſt him," Jude 14. 15. And how alarming is the warning given by the Son of God to you who are rejecters of Chriſt,—and ſhall continue in your unbelief, deſpiſing the goſpel of his grace! Prov. i. 24.—29. " Becauſe I have called, and ye " refuſed; I have ſtretched out my hand, and no " man regarded; but ye have ſet at nought all my " counſel, and would none of my reproof: I alſo " will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when " your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as deſo- " lation, and your deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind; " when diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon you. Then " ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they " ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me: " for that they hated knowledge, and did not chuſe " the fear of the Lord."

But our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt yet calleth you, ſinners of mankind, to " look unto him, " and be ſaved:" Iſ. xlv. 22. " Look unto me, and " be ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth; for I am " God, and there is none elſe." " Unto you, O " men, I call; and my voice is to the ſons of men," Prov. viii. 4. " How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye " love ſimplicity? and the ſcorners delight in their " ſcorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn ye at " my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit " unto you; I will make known my words unto " you," Prov. i. 22. 23.

" Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call " ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked

"forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his "thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord," through Christ, the new and living way, "and he "will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he "will abundantly pardon," Is. lv. 6. 7.

"I SAID, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that "was not called by my name," Is. xlv. 1. The Lord Jesus Christ yet calleth you, who are practically giving up with the profession of his name, to believe on the Son of God. "This is the work of "God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." And we know "that the Father sent the Son to be "the Saviour of the world."

OH then, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh "away the sin of the world," John i. 29.; and believe in him, as God your Saviour: for "this is "the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; "and this life is in his Son," 1 John v. 11.

WE are commanded to say unto the cities of Judah, "Behold your God," Is. xl. 9. A believing, realizing view of the glory of Emmanuel, would captivate your hearts, and make you sing with the Psalmist,—"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and "there is none upon earth that I desire besides "thee," Psal. lxxiii. 25.

1. IN the first place, then, we exhort you to come, and, under the influence of the Holy Spirit of promise, behold the great God your Saviour, in the glory of his person. He is "God manifest in the "flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, "received up into glory," 1 Tim. iii. 16.

THAT the glory of the great God our Saviour, is great and ineffable, will appear,—if we consider the myſterious conſtitution of his perſon, as he is God and man in one and the ſame perſon. There are in him, in his one ſingle individual perſon, two diſtinct natures; the one eternal, infinite, immenſe, and almighty, the form and eſſence of God; the other having a beginning in time, finite, limited, and confined to a certain place: and this is our nature, which he took on him when he "was made fleſh, and dwelt "among us," Phil. ii. 6. 7. John i. 14. Thus he aſſumed our nature, that he might glorify God, and fulfil all righteouſneſs, as the new-covenant Head; in that very nature which had ſinned, diſhonoured God, and violated his holy law. As God, he was impaſſible, or could not ſuffer; and he therefore took our nature,—that he might therein obey, ſuffer, and die, as a public perſon; in the room and place of his people;—that we might be reconciled to God, through the death of his Son; and that, by his obedience, many might be made righteous; and that he might bring many ſons unto glory, triumphing over ſin and Satan, death, hell, and the grave;—in that very nature which Satan had ſoiled, and ſin had defaced and ruined.

AND though many blaſphemouſly deny the perſonal union of the divine and human nature in the myſterious perſon of our Redeemer; yet there is not a truth of the goſpel that is more expreſsly revealed in the ſcriptures, than this great myſtery of godlineſs. And however the beams of that glory be ſo illuſtrious, that the blind world cannot bear the light and beauty thereof; yet wiſdom has been, and always will be, juſtified of her children. This glory is truly the glory of our religion, the glory of the

church, and the sole rock whereon it is built; being the only spring of present grace, and future glory.

2. As supernatural acquaintance with Christ is absolutely necessary for carrying you safely through in a day of calamity; be exhorted to come and behold the great God your Saviour, in the glory of his divine nature: Is. xlv. 22. "Look unto me, and be ye "saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, "and there is none else." If you see him not as God, you see him not at all; for he is "the true "God, and eternal life."

As to his divine nature, he is a Being of infinite perfection; all perfections are found in him; so that none can set bounds to terminate his excellency and perfection. He is "the God of glory," who appeared to Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran. And, "Behold, God "is great, and we knew him not, and his greatness "is unsearchable!"

As we are to guard against the extremes, both of Tritheism and Sabellianism; so we are to conceive of the Son of God, as one in essence, or of the same individual substance with the Father and the Holy Spirit; and that he is the Most High God, the only living and true God, as well as the Father; and therefore a Being of infinite perfection.

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the supreme Being; for when he "made promise to Abraham, "because he could swear by no greater, he sware by "himself," Heb. vi. 13. Gen. xxii. 11. 12. 15. He is the Origin and Fountain of all being, and hath being from none; he is self-existent, and all other

beings are derived from him: Exod. iii. 14. "Say "unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me un- "to you." His being is for himself; he is his own End; and all other beings are for him, for his glory; for "all things were created by him, and for him." His being is independent, and all other beings depend upon him; for in him they "live, and move, "and have their being:" and he "upholdeth all "things by the word of his power," Heb. i. 3. He is an infinite Being, and therefore he is incomprehensible; it being impossible that an infinite being can be comprehended by finite minds.

AND how infinitely glorious will the great God our Saviour appear,—if, by faith, we contemplate the lustre and resplendent glory of his attributes and perfections; his immensity, omniscience, eternity, and other divine excellencies! And if we likewise consider that his glory is an original glory,—which he doth not, considered in his divine nature, derive from another, but hath it from and of himself; and that he is the fountain of all that glory and perfection which is scattered up and down among the creatures. All that glory which may be observed upon the face of the creation, upon angels and men, is but a faint beam from that fountain of glory and perfection. And his glory is an essential glory; there is nothing in him but what is glorious; for he is "the God of "glory." It is an unchangeable and everlasting glory; an incomprehensible and infinite glory: it is a light no man can approach unto. If any creature search boldly into it, he will be overpowered and swallowed up by it. A faint ray of his glory darted on the face of Moses; made it shine so illustriously, that the Israelites were afraid to come near him. The brightness of his glory dazzles the

eyes of the very angels;—and would overwhelm their created faculties, did they not cover their faces with their wings, Is. vi. 2. Thus the glory of our Redeemer is "above the earth and heaven;" and in his glory he is "exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe," Pſal. cxlviii. 13. Neh. ix. 5.

How incomprehenſible is the glory, perfection, and excellency of the great God our Saviour! We cannot comprehend the nature of his works, nor ſearch out his creatures that are finite and near us, in our view; how much leſs him that is infinite!

He lets out but little of himſelf, in the manifeſtations which he makes of himſelf to created beings, becauſe their weak capacities can bear little: Job xxvi. 9. 14. "He holdeth back the face of his throne, "and ſpreadeth his cloud upon it.——Lo, theſe are "parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard "of him!" or, as the vulgar renders it, "How little "a drop!" All nations before him are as a drop of the bucket, or the ſmall duſt of the balance, leſs than nothing, and vanity. It is but a drop of that infinite ocean of perfection and glory which is in the great God our Saviour, that is let out by manifeſtation; the full flood would drown and overwhelm created minds. Or, as others render it, "How little "a whiſper is heard of him!" When God ſpeaks of his glory and perfection, in the ears of created beings, he expreſſeth himſelf in a ſmall whiſper; for a clear and full voice would break all their created organs at once. Angels, theſe thouſands of years, have been ſtudying his glorious excellencies; but when they have ſaid all they can to his praiſe, they muſt break off with this abrupt exclamation,—"Lo, theſe are

"parts of his ways; but how little a portion is "heard of him!"

3. Behold the great God our Saviour, as he is a Prieſt upon his throne: "He ſhall ſit and rule upon "his throne, and he ſhall be a Prieſt upon his throne," Zech. vi. 13.

He that is our Prieſt is a divine perſon, the Son of God, who is paſſed into the heavens. And he is a Prieſt in our nature; for he was taken from among men, and ordained for men in things pertaining to God. He aſſumed our nature, that the virtue of his Prieſthood might be communicated unto the ſons of men. His Prieſthood, in its virtue, looks as far back as Adam,—and forward to the laſt believing ſoul, and onward to all immortality. He is a Prieſt by God's appointment, and his own voluntary undertaking; a Prieſt ordained to offer ſacrifice for ſins: and this he did once, when he was once offered to bear the ſins of many. As our Prieſt, he has made reconciliation for the ſins of his people; and is entered into heaven itſelf, to appear in the preſence of God, making interceſſion for us.

How ineffable is the glory of our Redeemer! His throne is a throne of glory; a throne of eſſential glory, and of mediatory glory. His throne is a throne of grace, and all grace is diſpenſed from it; for "of "his fulneſs have all we received, and grace for grace." His throne is for ever and ever: it muſt and ſhall ſtand, when every other throne ſhall be caſt down. And to him that overcometh will he grant to ſit with him in his throne, even as he alſo overcame, and is ſet down with his Father in his throne.

How great is our consolation from this, that he is, and "shall be a Priest upon his throne?" When we see him as our Priest upon the throne, we see the human nature exalted above the nature of angels, in the person of the Son of God. And we may expect to obtain mercy at this throne, seeing it was erected for the benefit of sinners, such as we are; having this encouragement in our approaches to it, that the Mediator doth sit enthroned upon it in our nature. When we see him as our Priest upon the throne, we may be persuaded that he hath finished the work which the Father gave him to do; and that God is well-pleased, for the sake of his righteousness.

4. Be exhorted to come, and, by faith, behold the the great God our Saviour, in the glory which he had with the Father before the world began. Behold his glory, as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Behold him undertaking for bankrupt sinners, as the Surety of the better testament, saying, "Lo, I come: I delight to do thy "will: thy law is in my heart!" Behold him in his person, "Emmanuel, God with us; the Word made "flesh, and dwelling among us!" Behold him in his offices; a Prophet greater than Moses, a Priest greater than Aaron, and a King "higher than the "the kings of the earth:" A Prophet, to reveal God to us, a Priest, to bring us to God, and a King, to keep us with God! Behold him in his love; a love stronger than death, older than the heavens, and more lasting than these! Behold him, with the name written on his vesture and on his thigh, that no man knoweth but he himself! Behold him in the form of God, and equal with God; and yet, for our sakes, making himself of no reputation, and taking upon him the form of a servant?

Behold him in the manger, becauſe there was no room for him in the inn! the Ancient of days, an Infant of days! And behold the angels ſinging at his birth, his ſtar appearing in the eaſt, and the wiſe men fall down before him, and worſhipping him! Behold him going about doing good, working miracles of mercy both upon the bodies and ſouls of men, and yet having no where to lay his head! Behold him in Gethſemane in an *agony*, and praying more earneſtly, and ſweating, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground! Behold him with the crown of thorns and the purple-robe, and Pilate ſaying, "Behold "the man!" Behold him bowing his head, and giving up the ghoſt! O what a ſight, to ſee that bleſſed head falling to the one ſide! to ſee Life lying dead! to ſee his glorious head crowned with thorns, and his fair countenance ſpit upon! How moving a ſight is it to faith, to ſee his viſage more marred than any man, and his countenance than the ſons of men; his feet that went about doing good, nailed to the croſs; and his eyes that wept over Jeruſalem, cloſed by death! To ſee him drinking the cup of vindictive wrath due to an elect world, and ſaying, "The cup "that my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it?" To ſee him "bearing our griefs, and carrying our "ſorrows; wounded for our tranſgreſſions, and bruiſed for our iniquities!" To ſee him "oppreſſed "and afflicted, and not opening his mouth; cut "off out of the land of the living, and ſtricken "for the tranſgreſſion of his people, though he "had done no violence, neither was any deceit "in his mouth!" To ſee him making his ſoul an offering for ſin, and pouring out his ſoul unto death; and thus manifeſting, that he loved his church and people, and gave himſelf for them, an offering and a ſacrifice to God of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour!

BEHOLD him with a look of assent, believing the record that God gave of his Son, 1 John v. 11. 12. "This is the record, that God hath given to us "eternal life: and this life is in his Son. He that "hath the Son, hath life." He is the Saviour of the world by office; and ye have a warrant to trust in him, as God your Saviour. If ye reject him by unbelief, who is given to be the salvation of God to the ends of the earth, ye thus exclude yourselves from all saving benefit by him, and put yourselves among those "who have not the Son of God, and "have not life."

BEHOLD him with an appropriating and applying look of faith, saying, "In the Lord have I righ- "teousness and strength," Is. xlv. 24. depending on his word of grace and promise, for enabling you to speak the language of faith: "Surely, shall one say, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: "even to him shall men come; and all that are in- "censed against him shall be ashamed." You who are mankind-sinners are warranted and invited to come to Christ, who is "come to seek and to save "that which was lost." He saith, "Unto you, O "men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men:" and therefore, looking to a promising God, essay, in the faith of his promised grace, to come to Jesus, "the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the "blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things "than that of Abel," by believing on the Son of God, as God your Saviour. For the Lord hath said, "Even to him shall men come." And all that come are welcome: for before the foundation of the world was laid, he rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were with the sons of men. And he has said, "All that the Father giveth me,

" ſhall come to me: and him that cometh to me, I " will in nowiſe caſt out," John vi. 37. Even the chief of ſinners are invited to come, and are aſſured of welcome; for " he is able to ſave them to the ut- " termoſt that come unto God by him." And he has ſaid, Iſ. i. 18. " Come now, and let us reaſon to- " gether, ſaith the Lord: though your ſins be as " ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow: though " they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool!"

BEHOLD him with a fiducial look, putting your truſt and confidence in him; " believing, that, " through the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ye " ſhall be ſaved," Acts xv. 11. Under the influence of the Spirit of faith, believe, and be verily perſuaded of the ſufficiency of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to ſave ſinners, and you in particular, from ſin and wrath. Chriſt, with his righteouſneſs, is freely offered to you: therefore betake yourſelves to Chriſt and his righteouſneſs alone, for the ſalvation of your ſouls; truſting in him, in whom it is promiſed that " the Gentiles " ſhall truſt." As condemned men, betake yourſelves to Jeſus Chriſt; as he is the propitiatory mercy-ſeat, through his blood, affording ſafety to the guilty before a holy God.

" THIS is the work of God, that ye believe on " him whom he hath ſent." Faith doth approve of, acquieſce and delight in the way of ſalvation by Chriſt. It hath ſuch views of the glory of his perſon, and ſuch a refreſhing taſte of his " love, which " paſſeth knowledge," that the ſoul doth delight to be eternally in his debt; and doth like it well to hold all of the grace of Chriſt, that itſelf be nothing, and Chriſt himſelf be all. The ſoul, by faith, puts its confidence in Chriſt alone, renouncing all other confi-

dences: for, ſaith the apoſtle, "We are the cir-"cumciſion which worſhip God in the ſpirit, and "rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in "the fleſh," Phil. iii. 3.

Exhort. 2. We exhort all and every one of you to fly for refuge unto Chriſt, by the particular application of faith; and to take ſanctuary in him, who is "the hiding-place from the wind," before the decree bring forth, before the tempeſt beat upon you, and overwhelm you in the depths of eternal miſery and woe.

Our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, the bleſſed Emmanuel, is an hiding-place; a covert from the tempeſt of vindictive wrath, and from all the ſtorms, whether of a national calamity, or perſonal trials and ſufferings, to which his people may be expoſed in this lower world.

For "a man, the God-man, Emmanuel, ſhall be "as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert "from the tempeſt; as rivers of water in a dry place; "as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land," Iſ. xxxii. 2.

Take ſanctuary then in Chriſt, by believing in him, as the great God our Saviour. Conſider,

1. That the tempeſt of vindictive wrath, unto which all of us, as guilty ſinners, are by nature juſtly expoſed, is moſt terrible and awful. The tempeſt of a national calamity, and of perſonal trials and ſufferings, may blow upon us with great terror and violence: and if we are not found in

Christ, we will be shipwrecked in the gulph of eternal perdition.

The displeasure of God, his holy indignation, is the fruit of our sins and trespasses, which are grown up unto the heavens, Jer. ii. 19. Rom. vi. 23. A tempest doth often arise gradually; and some drops of this tempest do fall on sinners hereaway; but in hell the full floods go over the prisoners for ever.

Death, "the king of terrors," with its deadly sting;—the "curse of a broken law;"—the hidings of God's face, with the dreadful frowns of his holy and angry countenance;—that flaming attribute of inexorable justice, coming out against sinners, and particularly against Christ-despisers,—with the pains of hell for ever. This will be the horrible tempest which God shall rain upon the wicked, and which will be the portion of their cup, Psal. xi. 6.

We have ground to apprehend, that an awful tempest of a national visitation is near at hand: such a tempest as shall overcloud our heavens, that neither sun nor stars shall appear, Ezek. xxxii. 7. 8.; a tempest that will try the reality and the soundness of our faith in Christ. And if ye be not embarked in the gospel bottom, of which Christ himself is the skilful Pilot, all will be ruined. A tempest is approaching, which shall lay all desolate; "turning a fruitful land "into barrenness, for the sins of them that dwell "therein." When God's wrath begins to burn against sinners, and the tempest to blow, then how dreadful will the desolation be! There will be no safety, but in flying by faith unto Christ, who is the living Ark of Heaven.

2. CONSIDER that these storms of trials and sufferings are necessary: wherefore we have the greater reason to look out and prepare for them. We are "a land not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of "indignation." As a tempest is occasioned by the vapours which ascend from the earth; so the displeasure of God, or his holy indignation, is the fruit of our sins and trespasses. A storm is necessary to cleanse the air; to cleanse a land, such as we live in; which is defiled under its inhabitants, who have changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant.

THESE winnowing winds are necessary, to free the church from abundance of hypocrites. Many professors are like beautiful flowers in the time of the church's peace; but the wind of trials and sufferings passeth over them, and they are gone.

THESE blasts and winter-storms are useful, for making the rank weeds of corruption to rot; and for making faith, love to Christ, humility, heavenly-mindedness, contempt of the world, and other graces, to thrive in the soul.

THEY are useful, for making the Lord's people one among themselves, by reviving decayed Christian-love; as also for awakening them to a serious and solemn concern about the salvation of their souls; and for making them look at those things which are not seen, and are eternal.

3. CONSIDER that ye need to take sanctuary in Christ without delay; for there are signs of an approaching storm of personal and national calamities. Iniquity doth abound; "our land is filled with sin

" againſt the holy One of Iſrael:" and this is a certain ſign of deſolating judgments approaching. " Go " ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, and " ſee what I did to it, for the wickedneſs of my " people Iſrael," Jer. vii. 12. The general decay of religion, and of the power of godlineſs, forebodes deſtruction at the door. There is no ſpiritual life and affection in duties. Men hear the word as if they heard not, and pray as if they prayed not.

It is a manifeſt ſign of approaching deſolation, when Chriſt, in the goſpel of his grace, is rejected, Rom. xi. 20. Matth. xxii. 5. 7.; and when God's worſhip is corrupted: for men cannot invent a ſurer way to their own ruin, than that of bringing their own inventions into God's worſhip, Pſal. cvi. 39. 40. 41.

4. Consider that the great God our Saviour is the only ſanctuary and hiding-place from all the ſtorms of trouble and calamity, which do or may blow.

By faith, contemplate the glory of Chriſt, in his perſon, as Emmanuel, God with us. He is exhibited to you in the word of the goſpel, that ye may fly for refuge unto him, by believing and truſting in him, who is the *ſalvation of God* unto the ends of the earth. There is an infinite glory in Chriſt. A majeſty is ſeen in his perſon, by which he is higher than the heavens; and yet a lowlineſs or condeſcenſion, by which he approacheth to the very earth. A ſight of an abſolute God would ſtrike men blind, and dead too. No man can ſee God and live. But in Chriſt, the perfections of God ſhine with a brightneſs exactly adapted to the eye of faith: for in him the glory

of God is seen; and all that would hurt or overwhelm our natures, if seen, is vailed; as all that is comfortable, that our natures can bear a sight of in God, is seen in a most lively and heavenly manner.

And he is a sanctuary for you, a place of refuge, in his everlasting righteousness; which is the only ground of our access to God, and of our acceptance with him. His name is Jehovah our Righteousness: and in the way of believing, ye are to essay, under the influence of the Spirit of faith, to call him "Jehovah your righteousness." As a public person, the representative of an elect world, he substituted himself in their law, room, and place; and for them, in their stead, he fulfilled all righteousness, Matth. iii. 15.

How complete is the righteousness of the Son of God! Every thing that the law commanded, he obeyed; and every thing that the law threatened, he suffered. He magnified the law, and made it honourable: and, for his righteousness sake, God is well pleased.

This righteousness, for your justification, is freely offered and gifted to you in the gospel of the grace of God. And there is grace in the promise, for enabling you to take hold of it by faith: Is. xlv. 24. "Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righ-"teousness and strength."

Ye are warranted to trust in this righteousness of the Son of God, for your salvation, as it is exhibited to you in the word of grace: a righteousness every way sufficient for your acceptance with God, and for procuring the pardon of all your sins: for it is

the righteousness of God, of the Son of God; and therefore a divine righteousness, infinite in its virtue, value, and efficacy.

It repairs all the wrongs done to God by sin. It delivers from the charge of the law, which is answered by the obedience, death, and satisfaction of Christ. It relieves from sinking, despairing thoughts, Rom. viii. 33. It shuts and seals up the gulf of bottomless misery, as to the believer;—and puts the soul beyond all hazard of miscarrying for eternity, Rom. viii. 1. It gives access, with the boldness and confidence of faith, to God's throne of grace; yea, it raises above the condition of angels, and of Adam in paradise. It secures the soul's acceptance, without ebbing and flowing, according to the goodness or badness of a person's frame: and when it is apprehended by faith, that moment it makes the vilest sinner (in respect of justification) equal to Moses, to all the prophets and martyrs of Jesus; it being the same righteousness which our Lord Jesus Christ is presenting to the Father in heaven, for his church and people.

Be exhorted, then, to put in your note in the new song, saying, "I will praise thee more and more: "my mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness, and "thy salvation all the day; for I know not the num- "bers thereof," Psal. lxxi. 14. 15. Begin (and that with haste, for thou knowest not the day of thy death) to shew forth the righteousness and salvation of the eternal Son of God, the Saviour of the world,—— brought near to you in the gospel of his grace; by believing on him, as the Lord your righteousness, now, in the day of a gospel-dispensation; in the day of your life, and in the day of the Holy Spirit his

striving with you;—that ye may shew it forth in the day of your Christian course, and in the day of your death: and then ye shall have a long, an endless day, for shewing it forth to eternity, in the regions of light and bliss; for neither now nor then will ye "know "the numbers thereof!" Seeing the subject is, and will still be infinite, a celebrating the praise of an incarnate God, and the incomprehensible wonders of redeeming love; the notes and numbers of this song must be unsearchable and innumerable: so that all created beings, whether angels or men, will be still bending all their faculties and powers,—to know and to celebrate the "love of Christ, which passeth know-"ledge."

AGAIN, our Lord Jesus Christ is a covert and protection to his people, in his infinite grace and love. They are not separated from it by trouble, Rom. viii. 35.; and they are made to glory in tribulations, because "the love of God is shed abroad in their "hearts," Rom. v. 3. 5. The thoughts of this love, as infinite, free, and unchangeable, fill their souls with joy and peace in believing.

HE is a covert and defence to them, in his gracious presence with them, John xiv. 23.; in his watchful care over them, Is. xxvi. 3.; in his power, for their protection, John x. 28.; in his wisdom, for their direction, Psal. lxxiii. 24.; as also in his promises, and in his faithfulness to fulfil them to them, Psal. lvii. 3. and xci. 15. Is. xli. 10.

BE exhorted, then, to "turn to the strong-hold, "ye prisoners of hope; to gather yourselves toge-"ther," to Christ, the glorious Shiloh, "before the "decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, "before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you,

" before the day of the Lord's anger come upon " you. Seek ye the Lord;—ſeek righteouſneſs, ſeek " meekneſs; it may be ye ſhall be hid in the day of " the Lord's anger," Zech. ix. 12. Zeph. ii. 1. 2. 3.

Consider that Chriſt is the only hiding-place. For there is " no ſalvation in any other:—there is " none other name under heaven given among men, " whereby we muſt be ſaved," Acts iv. 12. He is an hiding-place for men, and not for fallen angels. To you he calleth, O men; and his voice is to the ſons of men. He took not on him the nature of angels, but the human nature, the ſeed of Abraham. And he ſaith, " If any man thirſt, let him come: " Look unto me, and be ye ſaved, all the ends of " the earth." Chriſt is a ſafe hiding-place: all the attributes of God, and juſtice itſelf, are in friendſhip with the inhabitants of this hiding-place, Rom. viii. 1. There is yet room in this hiding-place for you; and the door of acceſs is open for you, to enter into Chriſt, as your righteouſneſs, ſalvation, reſt, and bleſſedneſs. In a little, the door will be ſhut, Matth. xxv. 10. But thoſe who enter in by Chriſt, the door, the new and living way, they ſhall go in and out, and find paſture; they ſhall feed on the " hidden " manna, eat of the tree of life, drink of the river of " his pleaſures, and be ſatisfied with the goodneſs of " his houſe, even of his holy temple!"

Oh! then, turn in hither, as ſhelterleſs doves to your windows, under a ſenſe of danger; as the man-ſlayer to the city of refuge, with haſte, and without delay. Every one of you is invited to come, believing that, through the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, thou ſhalt find acceſs; and that, in the way of

truſting in him, thou ſhalt be ſaved. Come then, depending on him for his heart-drawing grace; ſaying with the church,—"Draw me, we will run after "thee." Ye are not only invited to come, but there is alſo a promiſe of grace, for enabling you to come and believe on the Son of God. At this day, the great trumpet of the goſpel-jubilee is blown; and it is promiſed, that "they ſhall come which were ready "to periſh in the land of Aſſyria, and the outcaſts "in the land of Egypt, and ſhall worſhip the Lord "in the holy mount at Jeruſalem," by believing on the Son of God, and through him "believing in "God, that raiſed him up from the dead, and gave "him glory, that your faith and hope might be in "God," Iſ. xxvii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 20. 21.

EZEK. vii. 2. 15.

——Thus ſaith the Lord God unto the land of Iſrael, An END. *The end is come upon the four corners of the land.——The ſword is without, and the peſtilence and the famine within. He that is in the field, ſhall die with the ſword; and he that is in the city, famine and peſtilence ſhall devour him.*

DEUT. xxix. 24. 25.

Even all nations ſhall ſay, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men ſhall ſay, Becauſe they have forſaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt.

LEV. xxvi. 23. 25.

And if ye will not be reformed by theſe things,—I will bring a ſword upon you, that ſhall avenge the quarrel of my covenant.

[The third diſcourſe on this ſubject.]

XII. WE now proceed, by divine aſſiſtance, to conſider another ground of the Lord's controverſy with theſe lands, which is an evident and alarming ſign of approaching national judgments, namely, covenant-violation.

"All nations ſhall ſay, Wherefore hath the Lord "done thus unto this land?" Deut. xxix. 24. "that "the whole land is brimſtone, and ſalt, and burn-

" ing; that it is not ſown, nor beareth, nor any graſs " groweth therein; like the overthrow of Sodom " and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which the " Lord overthrew in his anger and in his wrath," verſ. 23. When our cities are laid in ruins, our country made a field of blood, and our land becomes deſolate; the queſtion will be moved by ſtrangers, How came ſo ſtrong a people to be overpowered, ſo populous a land to be depopulated? The reaſon is ſo obvious, that it ſhall be ready in every man's mouth. It was " becauſe they have forſaken the covenant of " the Lord God of their fathers, which he made " with them."

In the other text likewiſe, we have, 1. The ſin of theſe lands, covenant-violation, clearly ſet before us, as a ſpecial ground of the Lord's controverſy with us. 2. The awful judgments which our breach of covenant is drawing down upon theſe lands; the ſword, with all its frightful concomitants of famine and peſtilence, to avenge the quarrel of God's covenant. 3. A certain ſign of theſe judgments being at the door, in that we have not been reformed by leſſer judgments, or by all the means which God hath beſtowed upon us. " If ye will not be reformed by " theſe things,—I will bring a ſword upon you, " that ſhall avenge the quarrel of my covenant.

From all which we may obſerve, that our covenant-violation is an eſpecial ground of God's controverſy with theſe lands, and that it is an evident ſign of approaching deſolation; ſeeing we refuſe to return to our allegiance to the Moſt High God, and hate to be reformed.

All the preceding inſtances of deſpiſing the Lord

Jesus, and rejecting him by unbelief, who is "the "desire of all nations," with the universal corruption of the generation, are a strong proof that we have changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant; which will appear, at first sight, to all who shall read those sacred bonds and vows which these lands have come under *.

In discoursing this subject a little, we shall endeavour, by divine assistance,

1. To offer a few thoughts or remarks concerning national covenanting.

2. To shew, that the practice of our ancestors, in entering into the Solemn League and Covenant, was warranted from the word of God; and that therefore these vows are binding upon posterity, under the New Testament, as well as they laid an obligation upon future generations to adhere to them, under the Old Testament.

3. To shew that the violation of these sacred vows and engagements is a crying sin, which is bringing down the awful judgments of God upon these covenant-breaking lands.

And then we shall conclude this discourse in a word of application.

We proceed then, by divine assistance,

First, To offer some thoughts or remarks concerning national-covenanting. And,

1. As to the nature of this solemn part of religious worship, it is to be remarked or observed,

* A copy of these vows, in our Covenants National and Solemn League, is subjoined to these discourses.

That we are not to put our perſonal covenanting, or our national covenants, in the room of the covenant of grace. Perſonal covenanting and national covenanting are of the ſame nature and kind; and differ only, as the one is tranſacted by perſons, ſingly and ſeparately conſidered, and the other by many perſons, jointly in a body.

MANY not duly attending to it, that the covenant of grace was made with Chriſt, as head and repreſentative of his church and people, a ſelect company of Adam's loſt family; and that the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is the condition of it, which was fulfilled by him, as a public perſon; and that a ſinner is inſtated in the covenant, effectually unto ſalvation, by faith or believing on Jeſus Chriſt, and thus is united to him who is the new-covenant Head †; and apprehending that God, in his word, declares himſelf willing to be our God, upon certain terms or conditions,—of repentance, faith, and obedience, to be performed by us: they therefore do accordingly make a covenant with God, taking him for their God, upon thoſe terms to be by them performed; promiſing and vowing, that if the Lord will be their God, pardon their ſins, and ſave their ſouls, they will, for their part, be his people, and faithfully ſerve him all the days of their lives, watching againſt all known ſin, and performing every known duty. But there are ſome miſtakes here, which we are to beware of.

FOR this is to confound and mingle the covenant of grace and our covenant of duty together, as if they were the ſame. But the covenant of grace was made from eternity, between the Father and the Son: as our covenant of duty is to be made, when we have

† See Mr Boſton's treatiſe on the covenant of grace.

been enabled to take hold of God's covenant of grace by faith; and never, till then, are we any way prepared for such solemn work. To proceed otherwise, were to bring in ourselves as parties transacting in the covenant of grace: whereas Christ alone, as the *Second Adam*, as the party-contractor upon man's side, as appears from Psal. lxxxix. throughout, Gal. iii. 16. Rom. v. 15. *&c.* Is. liii. 10. 11. God's holiness will not permit, his justice will not allow, and his infinite wisdom will not admit of a covenant-transaction with any sinner at first-hand.—And this would be to bring in ourselves, as to our doings, or what we are helped to do by grace,—into the conditionary part of the covenant; and thus to overthrow the doctrine of free grace, to take Christ's work out of his hand, to subvert the only foundation of the faith and hope of perishing sinners,—and to disparage the righteousness of Christ, the *Second Adam*, which is the only proper and real condition of the covenant of grace.

2. It is to be observed, in order to our understanding the nature of this transaction, that, by our believing the promise of God in his word, and by our trusting in the person of Christ, who is to be believed upon in the gospel of the grace of God,—we are united to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Covenant-head; and thereby we are personally entered into the covenant of grace, so as to have a saving interest in the righteousness of Christ, the condition of the covenant performed by him. Being united to him by faith, his righteousness is ours; for he is "JEHOVAH "our Righteousness." Being united to him, we have a right to eternal life, the promise of the covenant made to him; that is, eternal life becomes ours, upon the account of his everlasting righteousness, John xv. 5. Rom. v. 17. John x. 27. 28. 1 John v. 11.

"This is the record, that God hath given to us eter-
"nal life: and this life is in his Son." Verſ. 12.
"He that hath the Son, hath life." He hath life in the firſt-fruits of it: he hath the beginning of life in poſſeſſion, by having *the Son:* he hath the ſure title and right to eternal life; and he ſhall have the full poſſeſſion of it in due time.

3. We obſerve, that although a conſent to take Chriſt as our Lord, to be ruled and governed by him, to obſerve and keep all his commandments, be not the condition and terms of the covenant of grace, as we have already ſhown, by which doctrine legaliſts have ſubverted the goſpel of Chriſt, and turned the covenant of grace into a new law, or new form of a covenant of works: yet, upon the back of our believing the promiſe, and truſting on the perſon of Chriſt, by which we are perſonally entered into the covenant of grace, there doth neceſſarily and natively follow an abſolute conſent to take Chriſt for our alone King and Lord, reſigning ourſelves wholly to him in ſoul and body, to be reſcued by him from ſin, Satan, death, and the preſent evil world; to ſerve him for ever; to be ruled according to the will of his command; and to be diſpoſed of, according to the will of his providence: a conſent to renounce every known ſin; and, in the ſtrength of his grace, to perform every known duty: a conſent to ſubmit to whatever he ſees meet to lay upon us, taking up our croſs and following him, as he ſhall call us unto it: and all this by his grace, or in his ſtrength; without which we can do nothing.

What is here repreſented contains the ſubſtance of a covenant of duty, which all of us are bound to in our baptiſmal vows; but which we cannot right-

perform, until, first in order, we take hold of God's covenant of grace and promise, by faith in the Son of God, with whom the covenant of grace is made, and doth stand fast. And being united to him, we must depend upon him alone in the exercise of faith; deriving strength from him for performing all commanded duties, and depending upon his righteousness alone, for the acceptance of our persons and performances: John xv. 4. 5. "Abide in me, and I in "you: for without me ye can do nothing." Thus union with Christ, and the communications of his grace, by his Spirit and word, are the spring of all gospel-obedience and true holiness, Is. xlv. 24. Zech. x. 10. "I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they "shall walk up and down in his name, saith the "Lord."

4. We observe, that the Solemn League and Covenant was a lawful and laudable association of these kingdoms, for promoting true religion; preferring the glory of God, and the increase of Christ's kingdom, to all things in the world, and subordinating all things thereto, according to the will of God revealed in his word. It was a professed subjection of these three nations to Christ, in their swearing allegiance to Zion's King; and was, in some measure, the fulfilling of that prophecy, Hos. i. 11. "Then "shall the children of Judah and the children of Is-"rael appoint themselves one head;" and of that prophecy in Jer. l. 4. 5.

Now, this oath and vow being lawful and warrantable, and containing nothing but what is morally binding upon us, according to the word of God, —must necessarily be of perpetual obligation upon posterity; as much as the oath made by Joshua, and

the princes of the congregation of Israel, to the Gibeonites, was binding upon their posterity, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 2. 9. That the oath made to the Gibeonites was binding,—is evident, from the judgment of famine sent by the Lord, in the days of David, (as in the text now cited), for the sin of Saul, in slaying some of the Gibeonites; although this oath had been sworn to the Gibeonites some hundreds of years before the violation of it by that bloody action of Saul: and the anger of the Lord was not turned away in that judgment, till seven sons of Saul were hanged up before the sun. We have reason to fear, that the Lord will, in as awful and evident a manner, avenge the quarrel of his broken covenant in the isles of the sea; and that the judgment, as in the instance now hinted at, will fall heavily, and in a remarkable way and manner, upon such as have been most active in this course of defection and apostacy from the Lord: though some of those, who have opposed the corruptions and innovations of the times, may share in the stroke; seeing all are involved, some way or other, in the public sins of the day.

But the perpetual obligation of our vows in the Solemn League and Covenant upon the three kingdoms, as well as of the National Covenant of Scotland upon that realm, will further appear from what follows: as we now proceed, by divine assistance,

Secondly, To shew, that the practice of our ancestors, in entering into the Solemn League and Covenant, was warranted from the word of God; and that therefore these vows are binding upon posterity.

And this will appear, if we consider, that,

1. NOTHING is to be found in the Solemn League and Covenant, but an engagement, in the ſtrength of grace, to the performance of duties, which are morally binding in themſelves. For example,—we engage to endeavour the reformation of religion, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government, according to the word of God: and this is a duty binding upon us by the ſecond precept of the moral law: for in that precept we are all commanded by God, as is taught by the Weſtminſter aſſembly, from the ſcriptures cited in our Larger Catechiſm,—to receive, obſerve, keep pure and entire, all ſuch religious worſhip and ordinances, as God hath inſtituted in his word.

AND to endeavour, in our reſpective ſtations and callings,—to have Popery, Prelacy, ſuperſtition, hereſy, ſchiſm, and profaneneſs, removed out of theſe lands; to defend the King's majeſty, in the preſervation and defence of the true religion, and liberties of the kingdoms; to uſe all proper means preſcribed in the word of God, to prevent that the King be divided from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another; to endeavour, that peace be maintained between theſe kingdoms; as alſo to aſſiſt and defend one another in purſuing the reformation engaged into; to be humbled before God for our own ſins, and the ſins of theſe kingdoms; and to endeavour each one to go before another, in the example of a real reformation, in all the duties which we owe to God and man. All theſe are duties morally binding upon all perſons in theſe lands, at all times, according to the firſt and ſecond table of the moral law. Theſe vows are therefore of perpetual obligation upon poſterity, and the violation of them is exceeding ſinful.

THAT vowing to the Lord is a moral duty, further appears, if we consider that it is a duty enjoined in the third precept of the moral law; and that we are commanded to vow to the Lord, as well as to pay: Psal. lxxvi. 11. "Vow, and pay to the "Lord your God." It is a moral duty, which was both enjoined to the people of God, and practised by them. Job made a covenant with his eyes; and David did swear to keep God's righteous judgments, Psal. cxix. 106. "I have sworn, and I will "perform, that I will keep thy righteous judg-"ments."

2. THAT these national vows are warranted from the word of God, and are inviolable,—doth further appear, from the prophecies and promises of this duty, as acceptable worship to God under the gospel; as we may see in Is. xix. 18. 21. "In that day shall "five cities in the land of Egypt swear to the Lord "of hosts:—and the Lord shall be known to Egypt, "and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that "day;—yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, "and perform it."

EGYPT was enlightened by the gospel, early after our Lord's ascension into heaven, by the ministry of some of the preachers of the gospel. But under the name of Egypt, and in the promises of the grace of God made unto it, is more generally included the conversion of the Heathen or Gentile nations in gospel-days; in those very places of the world where Pagan darkness hath prevailed to the greatest height: for, by the gospel of the grace of God, the people who sat in darkness, did see a great light; and to them who were in the shadow of death, did light spring up.

HERE then we may observe a duty, and a solemn part of religious worship, which is to be performed and given to God in Egypt, now, by grace, brought into a church-state: "Five cities in the land of E-"gypt shall swear to the Lord of hosts." They shall not only swear by him, in a way of appeal unto him, as is done for putting an end to controversies between man and man; but they "shall swear to the "Lord of hosts:" they shall swear allegiance to him: they shall enter into a covenant of duty founded upon, and in consequence of their taking hold of God's covenant of grace and promise.

AND this duty is so much warranted in the word, that the supernatural knowledge of God for vowing, and the strengthening grace of God to perform these engagements, are wrapt up in the promise, vers. 21, "And the Lord shall be known to Egypt; "and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that "day;—yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, "and perform it." In that day they shall vow to the Lord, even in the gospel-day, which is frequently pointed out in scripture by that day, Zech. xii. 10. and xiii. 1. It is called a day, in respect of light and manifestation, as therein we see more clearly the glory of the Lord revealed: we see more clearly the covenant of grace, as it stands fast with Christ, which is the foundation upon which all our vows and engagements must be built: and we see more clearly the furniture that is in Christ, for making known the way of duty, with the grace and strength that is communicated by him to us, for enabling us to perform our vows to the Most High. Thus we find that swearing to the Lord of hosts is a duty under the New Testament, as well as it was under the Old.

In like manner the Lord hath ſaid, Iſ. xlv. 23. "I have ſworn by myſelf; the word is gone out "of my mouth in righteouſneſs, and ſhall not re- "turn, that unto me every knee ſhall bow, every "tongue ſhall ſwear." It may be here obſerved a- gain, that it is not only a ſwearing by the Lord, that is ſpoken of in this place, but a ſwearing unto the Lord. Mr Henry, on the place, ſaith,—"That the Lord hath here aſſured us, that he will be univerſally ſubmitted to; that the kingdoms of this world ſhall become his kingdom; they ſhall do him homage, "unto me every knee ſhall bow;" and they ſhall bind themſelves by an oath of allegiance to him, "unto me every tongue ſhall ſwear." This is applied to the dominion of our Lord Jeſus, Rom. xiv. 10. 11.; and it ſeems to be referred to, Pſal. ii. 9. 10. If the heart be made willing in the day of his power, the knee will bow to him in humble adorations, in a cheerful obedience to his commands, ſubmiſſion to his diſpoſals, and compliance with his will in both; and the tongue will ſwear to him, will lay a bond upon the ſoul, to engage it for ever to him; for he that bears an honeſt mind, doth never ſtartle at aſſurances."

3. That theſe national vows are warranted from the word of God, and are inviolable, will appear, if we conſider how much the Lord accounts an oath binding, Deut. xxiii. 21. "When thou ſhalt vow a "vow unto the Lord thy God, thou ſhalt not ſlack "to pay it: for the Lord thy God will ſurely re- "quire it of thee; and it would be ſin in thee." The Lord gives out laws to Moſes for vows, and will have them declared, Numb. xxx. 2. Our oaths and vows muſt be kept, or the tranſgreſſors muſt be pu-

nished, Ezek. xvii. 19. Jer. xxxiv. 8. 15. 16. 17. 18. Rom. i. 31. 2 Tim. iii. 3.

THE inviolableness of the oath of God, appears from the law of nature and nations itself. For the law of nature teacheth, that if a man swear by God, he must keep his oath: and if it once be allowed that a man may break his oath, *Atheism* is introduced; so that there is not a nation, nay, not an individual person, under the sun, secure; all society among men is dissolved, the bond of security is cancelled, and the law of nature itself is unhinged! This may convince every man who has the exercise of reason, thought, and reflection, that these vows to the Most High God are inviolable.

4. THAT these national vows are warranted from the word of God, and are inviolable, will appear, if we consider that the ends of this duty are of the same moral nature now, under the New Testament, as they were under the Old, when they renewed their covenant-engagements, in the days of Nehemiah, Josiah, and others. We are under as great and strong obligations to maintain the purity of God's worship, to adhere to his truths, and to walk closely with God, as they were: and we are as ready to turn aside from the Lord as they were. Our graces are weak, our corruptions are strong, our temptations are many; and we have as much need of this mean of God's appointment, for awakening our attention to duty, and for strengthening our faith and dependence upon the Lord, as they had.

THEY entered into a covenant with the Lord, in a time of much backsliding and corruption, Ezra ix. 1.; when they had mingled with the Heathen, and

learned of them their way. And that this is sadly the case with us, is so far evident,—that attentive observers are in fear, lest these lands, if they proceed in their present course of apostasy, be in danger of casting off Christianity itself.

AGAIN, they renewed their vows to the Lord, when they were under great judgments, as in Neh. ix. 37. 38. And are we not under God's judgments, in a great measure inflicted? and is there not a cloud of awful threatened judgments, that seems to be about to break upon these lands, for our abominations,—if sovereign mercy interpose not, in turning us to the Lord, from whom we have deeply revolted?

5. THAT these national vows are warranted from the word of God, and are inviolable, will appear,—if we consider that it is a duty, not only plainly taught and laid before us in the Old Testament, but it is a duty practised by the church in New-testament times. For not only is it prophesied by the inspired apostle John, Rev. ix. 15. that "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our "Lord, and of his Christ;" and they become the kingdoms of Christ, by professing their faith, obedience, subjection, and allegiance to him; as before they had been the kingdoms of Antichrist, when they professed their subjection to him, receiving his mark in their hands and foreheads; which prophecy has, in some measure, had its accomplishment upon the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, when they surrendered themselves to the Lord, and swore allegiance to Zion's King,—in our Covenants National and Solemn League: but it is likewise plainly asserted, that the Macedonians gave themselves to the Lord in a covenant of duty; wherein they devoted

themselves to the Lord, vowing to keep his commandments, and to obey his voice: 2 Cor. viii. 5. "This they did, not as we hoped, but first gave "their ownselves to the Lord, and unto us by the "will of God." And it must be our duty, as well as it was the duty of the Macedonians, to "give our "ownselves to the Lord." The apostle is speaking in this chapter about their giving of their substance for the support of the cause of Christ; but he lets us know, that they kept the due order,—"first they "gave their ownselves to the Lord."

AGREEABLY to scripture-precepts and patterns, of perpetual obligation and use,—the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, did concur in giving themselves to the Lord, in the *Solemn League* and *Covenant*: in pursuance of which engagements, pure standards of doctrine, in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, were established; and a considerable pitch of reformation, as to the worship of God, and government of the church, was attained unto, in our "Directory for the puplic worship of God, and form "of Presbyterial church-government.——And that these solemn vows are inviolable, doth further appear, from the solemnity with which they were made, as is recorded in the history of those times; being sworn and subscribed by all ranks in England and Scotland in the year 1643; being ratified by an act of the parliament of Scotland in the year 1644; and taken and subscribed by King Charles II. at Scoon, January 1. 1651.

It might be shown, that it has been the practice of the churches in Germany, France, and others, to devote themselves to the Lord in a covenant of duty; so that our ancestors were not singular, in giving

themſelves and their poſterity to the Lord. Nations continue to ſubſiſt in their poſterity, and ſo national vows are binding on poſterity; as in the caſe of the oath to the Gibeonites.

THAT many ways we have violated theſe ſacred vows to the Moſt High, is ſo evident, from what has been ſaid, beſide what may be advanced in the ſequel, —that we need not ſtand here to illuſtrate it. And therefore we proceed, by divine aſſiſtance,

Thirdly, To ſhew, that the violation of theſe ſacred engagements is a crying ſin, which is bringing down the awful judgments of God upon theſe covenant-breaking lands. And,

1. THIS is evident, if we reflect, that the Heathens, as blind as they were, could diſcover it in the profeſſing people of God,—and gave it as the reaſon of that ruin and deſolation which befel them; demanding of one another, as they paſſed by the ruins of Jeruſalem, Jer. xxii. 8. "Wherefore hath the Lord "done thus unto this great city?" verſ. 9. "Then "they ſhall anſwer, Becauſe they have forſaken the "covenant of the Lord their God." Thus they did ſee, even by the light of nature, that covenant-violation was an hainous ſin, drawing down the wrath of God from heaven upon covenant-breakers.

2. THOSE who have been acquainted with God, and have ſeen into the nature of ſin, have bewailed this ſin in the deepeſt agonies of ſpirit, Ezra ix. Neh. ix. And Daniel, chap ix. doth bewail breach of covenant with much confuſion of face, and brokenneſs of heart, verſ. 7. 8. *&c.*

3. The Lord hath threatened and avenged this sin with the most grievous judgments. The sword is sent, with an awful train of other dreadful judgments, to avenge the quarrel of covenant-violation: Lev. xxvi. 25.—33. "I will bring a sword upon you, "that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant. I "will send the pestilence among you, and ye shall be "delivered into the hand of the enemy. I have bro-"ken the staff of your bread. If ye will walk con-"trary unto me, I will chastise you seven times for "your sins. Ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and "the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. I will cast "your carcases upon the carcases of your idols, and "my soul shall abhor you. I will make your cities "waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation. "I will bring the land into desolation. I will scat-"ter you among the Heathen, and will draw out a "sword after you." And we may fear that God is saying concerning us, as once to his prophet Ezekiel, concerning Israel, chap. xxi. 9. 10. "A sword, a "sword is sharpened, and also furbished: it is sharp-"ened to make a sore slaughter. Should we then "make mirth?" No; such times of judgment are times of mourning, and not of carnal joy.

He adds, "It contemneth the rod of my Son, as "every tree." In the marginal reading it is, "The "rod of my Son; it despiseth every tree." Compare Psal. ii. 9. "Thou shalt break them with a rod of "iron." This sword is that rod of iron, that wrath of the Son of God, for despising and rejecting the gospel of the grace of God; and for all the abominations of these lands, which are the native fruits and consequences thereof. This sword is put into the hand of the executioner, verf. 11. "This sword "is sharpened, and it is furbished, to give it into the

"hand of the ſlayer." It is ſharpened, that it may cut, and wound and make a ſore ſlaughter; and it is furbiſhed, that it may glitter, to the terror of thoſe againſt whom it is drawn.

And this ſword, verſ. 12. "ſhall be upon my "people." When God's profeſſing people are revolted from him, and in rebellion againſt him, his ſword will be upon them; and their judgments ſhall be more awful than thoſe of a people that have never had the benefit of the goſpel.

And this ſword, verſ. 12. 14. 15. "ſhall be upon "all the Princes of Iſrael. It is the ſword of the "great men that are ſlain, which entereth into their "privy chambers. I have ſet the point of the ſword "againſt all their gates, that their heart may faint, "and their ruins be multiplied. Ah, it is made bright, "it is wrapt up for the ſlaughter!"

The ſword is particularly directed againſt the great men; for they "have altogether broken the yoke, "and burſt the bonds," Jer. v. 5. With them, in a ſpecial manner, God's controverſy is ſtated, who had been the ringleaders in ſin. And their dignity or power ſhall not be their ſecurity in the day of viſitation. "The point of the ſword is againſt all their "gates." Whatever thoſe gates be where ſin entereth, judgment will follow it: for God's wrath and diſpleaſure is inſeparably connected with ſin, and follows it as the ſhadow does the body, as the night follows the day. Gates, never ſo well guarded, are no fence againſt the point of the ſword of God's judgments. The glory of God's holineſs and juſtice may ſeem to be eclipſed for a time, during the day of his patience, and the delay of his judgments; yet

they will shine out again, and be displayed in a most illustrious manner, by his righteous judgments.

And it is highly suitable to the divine perfections, that the Most High should thus vindicate his own honour and glory. When all flesh have corrupted their ways;—when God's holy ordinances, yea, holiness itself, are contemned;—when all sorts of uncleanness and luxury do prevail: and if many, not only of a more inferior rank, but of our great men, live in open adultery; and if the greatest in the kingdom has been a bad example to them, must not the land be ripened for the sickle of God's judgments, and the wrath of God break in upon us as a flood; if sovereign grace interpose not, by bringing us to faith in the Son of God, with repentance and reformation, as the Lord is threatening us with "terrible things in "righteousness?" When ingratitude for mercies, incorrigibleness under judgments, multitudes of oaths and blasphemies, wicked profanations of the Lord's day, unbelief, in rejecting the great God our Saviour, with his offers of grace and salvation in the word of the gospel; Infidelity, Atheism, and irreligion, with gross ignorance, and a deluge of immoralities of all sorts: when these abominations, and many more, together with covenant-violation, are the indictment; shall not the Lord visit for these things, and vindicate the honour of his name, that men may know that God ruleth in Jacob to the ends of the earth? Wherefore let us all look to the Lord for the Spirit of faith, and of gospel-humiliation; that we may be enabled to believe in the Son of God, so as to repent and turn from all our transgressions, that our iniquity may not be our ruin.

We conclude this discourse with an exhortation, *viz.*

"COME, and let us return unto the Lord," Hos. vi. 1. Let England, Scotland, and Ireland, come, "going and weeping;" let them "go, and "seek the Lord their God, saying, Come; and let us "join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant "that shall not be forgotten," Jer. l. 4. 5.

As it was Israel's duty, so it is ours, to renew our national vows and covenants, after an awful course of apostasy from the Lord. The Lord is threatening to bring a sword upon us, to avenge the quarrel of his covenant, Lev. xxvi. 25. And "if he whet his glit-"tering sword, and his hand take hold on judgment, "he will render vengeance to his enemies, and will "reward them that hate him: he will make his ar-"rows drunk with blood, and his sword shall devour "flesh," Deut. xxxii. 41. 42.

THESE lands, according to their power, have buried a covenanted work of reformation. His enemies have roared in the midst of his congregations; they have broken down the carved work; they have defiled, by casting down the dwelling-place of his name to the ground, Psal. lxxiv. 4. 6. 7. The blood of his witnessing servants have they shed like water round about Jerusalem, Psal. lxxix. 3. Wherefore "the "Lord will avenge the blood of his servants, and will "render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be "merciful unto his land, and to his people," Deut. xxxii. 43.

AND seeing the Lord is coming out against us, it is high time for us to consider of having this quarrel and controversy taken up; and that we ourselves be reconciled to God, through the death of his Son: that we return to our allegiance to Zion's King, by

faith in him, by gospel-repentance, as also, by personal and national reformation; else we and our families are all but the children of death and destruction. This sword, it is to be feared, will go quite through the land; and, in the pursuit of this quarrel, cut off men of all ranks, till our land be desolate, and our cities waste, in the day of the fierce anger of JEHOVAH.

As we are called upon to be humbled, for the violation of our covenant-engagements; so it is our duty to return to our *allegiance* to the Lord, in taking hold of God's covenant of promise by faith; and, in the faith of God's promised grace, to devote ourselves and these lands to the Lord in a covenant of duty. "Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God. "Let all that be round about him, bring presents un- "to him that ought to be feared, Psal lxxvi. 11.

VOWING to the Lord, then, is a duty which we are called unto, that we may renew our baptismal vows, and national engagements. Some things are duty immediately, and some mediately. There is a duty which, in the order of nature, goes before vowing and swearing to the Lord in a covenant of duty; and that is the duty of believing in the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ: for without faith it is impossible to please God, or to glorify him, or have strength communicated from him, in whose strength only we can vow and pay to the Lord. And it is the immediate duty of all who have believed in the Son of God, to swear to the Lord of hosts: while it is the duty of all such as have not yet believed, to believe immediately, without any further delay; and believing, to devote themselves to the Lord, in a covenant of duty.

We therefore call you, in the name of the Lord, immediately to believe in the name of the Son of God, who is "JEHOVAH our righteousness:" and remember, that we deal with your consciences, we deal with immortal souls, with a view to our appearance before the judgment-seat of Christ.

THAT we may be excited to this seasonable and necessary duty, of renewing our engagements to the Lord, let us consider, that,

1. THE duties which our ancestors engaged to perform, were duties morally binding: and these engagements were solemnly sworn to by all ranks, in England and Scotland; by our nobles and great men, and by the most eminent citizens in London, who gave a laudable example to others, by their distinguished zeal for true religion, and their solid principles of true loyalty. They were sworn and entered into universally, by such as moved in the highest sphere of action, and by the meanest of the subjects. And the entering into these engagements was remarkably countenanced of God, by the communications of his grace; and by his blessing enabled great numbers, who had come under these vows to the Most High, to an evident reformation of their lives, and to attend the means of his worship with holy reverence; insomuch that multitudes in the city of London, that great metropolis, were heard by such as were walking the streets, each evening, to be employed about the worship of God in their families. Shall we then continue in the violation of these our solemn vows to the Lord? "Shall we e-"scape that do such things? Or shall we break the "covenant, and be delivered?" Ezek. xvii. 15.

2. Let us consider that these national vows are of perpetual obligation, and are binding upon posterity; as much as the oath sworn to the Gibeonites, (of which we spoke formerly), was of binding force upon future generations: and the duties sworn to being of a moral nature, are binding upon all persons, at all times. Moses declared to Israel, that he made the covenant mentioned in Deut xxix. not only with them who stood before the Lord that day, but also with them who were not there; that is, with their generations to come, verf. 14. 15. who were to be visited with God's judgments "to the third and "fourth generation," if they should break his covenant, Exod. xx. 5. And that future generations should be brought to justify God's visitation of them, is taught likewise by Moses, Deut. xxix. 22. 24. 25. "The generation to come shall say, Wherefore hath "the Lord done thus unto this land? Because they "have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of "their fathers."

Moreover, that these vows are binding upon posterity, and upon us in this generation, is evidently declared by some passages of the Solemn League and Covenant. In the preamble, they say, "We have re- "solved to enter into a mutual and solemn league and "covenant, for the preservation of our religion from "utter ruin." And religion is a blessing, not peculiar to that present generation, but common also to the rising and following generations; which no doubt our worthy ancestors had an eye to, as well as the benefit of their own times. Again, *Article* 1. they say, "We shall endeavour to bring the churches of "God, in the three kingdoms, to the nearest con- "junction and uniformity in religion; that we, and "our posterity after us, may, as brethren, live in

"faith and love; and the Lord may delight to dwell "in the midſt of us." *Article* 2. "We ſhall en- "deavour," *&c.* that the Lord may be one, and his "name one, in the three kingdoms." And in *Article* 5. they ſay, "We ſhall endeavour, that theſe "kingdoms may remain conjoined in a firm peace "and union to all poſterity." Theſe words ſo plainly declare, that our anceſtors intended to include the preſent and future generations in this vow to the Moſt High God, that they need no explication: and by this union or conjunction they had in view, not only the outward peace of theſe kingdoms; but alſo the neareſt conjunction and uniformity in religion, Confeſſion of Faith, Form of Church government, Directory for Worſhip and Catechiſing; as they themſelves plainly declare, in the expreſs words of the oath ſworn by them.

THEREFORE we may conclude, that as ſure as the ſun and moon are in the firmament, God will avenge the quarrel of his covenant upon theſe lands, and pour out the vials of his wrath upon them; if they do not return to the Lord in the way of faith, with repentance and reformation, both perſonal and national.

3. LET us conſider how exceedingly God has been diſhonoured among us, by all ſorts of covenant-violation; and that it has been the practice of the church in all ages, to renew their covenant-engagements, after a courſe of backſliding and apoſtaſy. It has been the practice of the Antichriſtian ſtate to propagate and ſpread itſelf by oaths and covenants, in all their fraternities and ſocieties. And ought not we then to uſe that mean for bringing down Babylon, which they have perverted and abuſed for build-

ing it up; especially seeing it is a commanded duty to renew our covenants with the Lord our God? We know not but the Lord may, in the use of endeavours this way, seal his servants and people in their foreheads, Rev. vii. 3. and thus prepare them for a storm of threatened judgments.

"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel;" for there are evident signs, that God is purposing to avenge the quarrel of his buried and burnt covenants, upon these perfidious covenant-breaking lands; because of their shedding the blood of the saints of the Most High; because of their rejecting glorious Christ, and the offers of his grace; because of their infidelity, irreligion, profaneness, lewdness, wickedness, and immoralities of all sorts; and for the contrary oaths and bonds, which have been taken in former and present times, subversive of the oath of God.

We conclude,—exhorting all to take hold of God's covenant of promise, by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, who is the Surety of the covenant. "Also the sons of "the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to "serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to "be his servants; every one that keepeth the Sab-"bath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my co-"venant;—their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices "shall be accepted upon mine altar," Is. lvi. 6. 7.

Believe, under the influence of the divine Spirit, that ye are born rebels against God; that your sins are all marked before him, original and actual; that ye are lost and undone sinners, utterly unable to help yourselves, Gal. iii. 10. Rom. v. 6.——Believe that Christ is a sufficient Saviour, able to save you

from your sins, and from the wrath of God, Heb. xii. 25.——Believe that Jesus Christ, with his righteousness, and all his salvation, is by himself offered to you, Prov. viii. 4. Is. lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17.——Believe that ye have a right to Christ, a warrant to put in your claim to him, as your Saviour, in particular, upon God's gift of him to you in the word of grace and promise, and upon his own offer, 1 John v. 11. and vi. 32. 33.——Believe and trust on him wholly, as your Saviour, and in his righteousness, as made over to you; and that for the whole of his salvation to you in particular, upon the ground of God's faithfulness in his word of grace and promise, Rom. xv. 12. Acts xv. 11. 1 Thess. ii. 13.——And believing in him, ye shall be saved; your person shall be accepted in the Beloved; your burnt-offerings and sacrifices shall be accepted upon God's altar;—that is, through Christ, the gospel-altar, which sanctifieth the gift.

EZEK. vii. 2. 15.

——*Thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel, An* END. *The end is come upon the four corners of the land.——The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within. He that is in the field, shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.*

MICAH vi. 16.

For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels, that I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof an hissing: therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people.

[The fourth discourse on this subject.]

XIII. ANother ground of the Lord's controversy with these lands, which is an evident and alarming sign of approaching national judgments,—is corruption of religion and the worship of God.

No public countenance given to such corruptions, no example of the great, no concurrence of multitudes, no pretended prudential considerations,—can justify them before God; for this is our indictment, as well as it was of the Jews of old,—"The statutes "of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house "of Ahab."——These reigns of Omri and Ahab were some ages before the time wherein this prophet lived; yet the corruption in religion which they supported remained to that day: those statutes were still kept, and the succeeding generations walked in

the ſame counſels. But it was nevertheleſs evil in itſelf, provoking to God, and dangerous to ſinners, for its having been long continued: it ſo much the more did haſten their ruin and deſolation. "Ye walk "in their counſels, that I ſhould make thee a deſola- "tion, and the inhabitants an hiſſing.

Such is the corruption in doctrine at this day, that it might employ a man, during his whole life, to trace out and refute all the various errors, hereſies, and blaſphemies of the preſent age. The religion of the preſent generation is, properly ſpeaking, no religion at all. Atheiſm, Deiſm, irreligion, and infidelity, with a flood of lewdneſs and abominations of all ſorts, have overſpread theſe lands: and all this is owing, in a great meaſure, to the corruption in government, diſcipline, and worſhip.

It can never be imagined, that the Moſt High will bleſs modes of worſhip introduced by human inventions, for begetting and maintaining ſpiritual and reverential impreſſions of the infinite Object of worſhip upon the ſpirits of men! for "in vain," ſaith the Lord, "do they worſhip me, teaching for doc- "trines the commandments of men." And when men have loſt all due impreſſions of the infinite majeſty of God, they lie open to all errors and deluſions, and are in danger to be carried away by a variety of diſſolute practices.

When the government and diſcipline of Chriſt's inſtitution is perverted and overthrown,—the proper means of God's appointment, for maintaining truth in its purity and holineſs in converſation, are quite removed; whereby a door is opened for error

in principle, and immorality in practice; yea, all licentiousness whatsoever. And,

1. That church-government ought to be reformed, according to our national vows, is manifest; seeing Episcopal government was not instituted by Christ: for our Lord Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the church, has committed the keys of government to office-bearers, to act in parity together. No order of church-officers, above pastors or gospel-ministers, is acknowledged in the word of God; and to them is committed the power of ordination and government, as well as of dispensing the word and sacraments.

A Bishop and a Presbyter signify the same person in the New Testament; and no where in the word, is the least notice taken of any such sacred office as had the power of administering sacraments, but not of ruling the church, and ordaining ministers: and the apostle Paul doth expressly ascribe the ordination of Timothy to the presbytery. Wherefore it is a corruption which ought to be reformed, that an ecclesiastical office, superior to presbyters, is pretended and allowed, assuming to themselves the sole power of jurisdiction and ordination.

It is quite repugnant to the holy scriptures, and altogether unknown to the primitive church, that one bishop, without his presbytery, doth, by a lay chancellor's court, govern all the presbyters and churches of a diocese; and that in a secular manner, by abundance of secular officers, unknown to the scripture, and to all antiquity.——Our Lord Jesus Christ tells us, that his kingdom is not of this world,

John xviii. 36.; and how then can his officers be of it?

Neither is it agreeable to the word of God, that bishops assume to themselves titles of honour, and, as Peers, sit in the house of Lords, to manage the great affairs of state: for our Lord has warned all the office-bearers in the church to beware of those things, Matth. xx. 25. *&c.* Luke xxii. 25. *&c.* 2 Tim. ii. 3. 4. Herein also they are unlike the pastors of the primitive church, who, according to the rule of the word, were very remote from intangling themselves with the affairs of this life,—and assumed no such titles of honour; but, by their faithfulness and diligence in their ministrations, maintained their reputation and authority without them. It is certain, that the primitive church had no such bishops as were ranked with the nobles of their country: yea, there were canons in the primitive church, whereby bishops were discharged from engaging in public administrations of secular affairs, upon the pain of deposition and excommunication.

With respect to deans and chapters, we shall only notice Mr Calvin's judgment concerning them, (Instit. l. 4.) who says,—That "since all such kind of offices, whatever titles they are honoured with, are newly invented,—having no foundation in any divine appointment, or in the ancient practice of the church, they ought to have no place in the description of that spiritual government which the church has received, as being made sacred by the word of the Lord himself."

The pretended divine right of Prelacy has long since been given up with, by the most learned among

the Episcopalians themselves; as might be shown by producing a great many writers, if it were fit to make such a digression from the present scope and design.

And Mr Calderwood, with a great many other divines, have long ago proved, by unanswerable arguments from the holy scriptures, and from antiquity likewise, that Presbyterial government is the true and only form of government instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ in his church. However, we are not now to enter upon that subject directly, but by the way, as we have done above.

We add, That as it is a solid answer which Protestant divines give to the Papists, when calling for negative proof from the scriptures, against their idolatrous and unwritten traditions, *viz.* That "there is no need of any negative proof to disprove them, because they are not contained in our only rule of faith,—the word of God;" so it may be advanced, among other arguments, That since church-government by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, &c. has no foundation in the holy scriptures, a reformation in church-government ought to take place, according to the word of God, and our national vows and engagements.

And considering, that as there are about ten thousand parishes in England, so there are a great many of their teachers who have neither a capacity for instructing the people, nor a sufficient maintenance; so that immortal souls are perishing for lack of the knowledge of Christ, and of the principles of our holy religion. The vast benefices conferred on a few, to support an imaginary, useless, and hurtful

dignity, might be to good purpose employed for supporting a gospel-minister, one or more, in each parish, according as its extent made it needful; who might give themselves wholly to the ministry of the word, and the inspection of their flocks.

2. A REFORMATION is likewise necessary as to modes of worship.

It is a Protestant principle, founded upon the scriptures, our only rule, in opposition to all the superstitious rites of Antichrist, That the will of God, discovered in the holy scriptures, is the only rule of religious worship; so that it is not lawful for men to devise any new ways of worshipping him, or to receive and practise any such, when devised by other men.——And it is an awful warning which the Lord gives of his righteous judgment against will-worship, or forms and rites of human invention in his worship, such as took place among the ten tribes at Bethel: Amos iii. 13. 14. 15. "Hear ye, and "testify in the house of Jacob, saith the Lord "God, the God of hosts, That in the day that I "shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him, I "will also visit the altars of Bethel, and the horns of "the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground. "And I will smite the winter-house with the sum-"mer-house, and the houses of ivory shall perish, "and the great houses shall have an end, saith the "Lord."

THE rites and ceremonies of the church, which are devised by men, and imposed upon the consciences of a great many who have not freedom to receive or practise them, are so numerous, that we shall only give a passing hint at a few of them.

KNEELING at the sacrament cannot be cleared of superstition, and of symbolizing with the Papists. It is certain that the sacrament of the supper, in its first institution by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, was received by the disciples in a table-posture, not in a posture of worship and adoration.——We find that God himself approves this posture of sitting in eucharistical feasts, 1 Sam. xvi. 5. 11. Ezek. xliv. 3. Wherefore a table-posture is proper enough for a feast of thanksgiving. Nor is that custom to be lightly altered, which Christ has translated from the Jewish into the gospel-worship, and has confirmed by his own example. The Papists, who absurdly imagine, that the bread and the wine in the sacrament are changed into the very body and blood of Christ, do, agreeably enough to their own principles, kneel at the receiving of it: but for Protestants to imitate them, is, in some respect, a receding from the testimony which they are obliged to give against the horrid idolatry of the mass. The posture of kneeling seems to have been introduced into the church, for maintaining and supporting transubstantiation: for Pope Honorius, in the year 1214, introduced kneeling at the sacrament; and his predecessor, Innocent III. ordained transubstantiation.——From all which, it is evident, that this new mode of worship ought to be set aside, and not imposed upon mens consciences, nor practised by Protestants, who thereby only harden Papists in their idolatry, and some way recede from their own principle, That the word of God is their only rule as to the worship of God, as well as to the articles of their faith.

THE *surplice*, and other ecclesiastical habits, have been defiled with the most abominable superstition by the Papists: what reason then can there be, why a

reformed church should affect a likeness therein to the idolatrous church of Rome? Under the Old Testament, holy garments were prescribed by God's command; but under the New, we acknowledge no distinction between sacred and profane garments: and seeing these garments have no divine institution, they must have their rise from mens inventions; which therefore, according to our Lord's express direction, are not to be used in the worship of God: "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines "the commandments of men." The ancients used not the surplice, though the Pagans did; from whom the Papists had it, and we from them. It seems to have been brought into the church, after the rise of Antichrist, by Pope Adrian, in the year 796. And since we esteem Papists idolaters, why should we be fond of their superstitious garb? Faith, and not fancy, ought to be employed in divine worship: John iv. 24. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, "must worship him in spirit and in truth." Faith sees the invisible God in his own word; and it cannot be assisted, but is opposed and thwarted in its exercise, by mens inventions, and unwarrantable additions to Christ's ordinances and holy institutions. And seeing the great God our Saviour has left his religion free from all those trifles, therefore by no right whatsoever can they be commanded by men, Matth. xv. 19. Col. ii. 21. 22. 23.

As to the *liturgy*, it may be observed, that though children, or those who are like children in knowledge, may use a form of prayer composed by others, till they are able to compose their prayers themselves; yet forms of prayer are not to be composed for all, nor imposed upon any.

It is certain that no form of prayer can be devised by men, which will fit all the various and sudden cases that may happen. For example, the Lord may send some sudden and dreadful judgment, that would strike the whole nation with terror: and if it should happen to make its first appearance upon the Saturday, is it not necessary duty, that both ministers and people should, with a dependence upon the grace that is in Christ, essay to humble themselves before God on the Lord's day, the day immediately following; and that their petitions, as well as their confessions, be adapted to present circumstances? Or can it be thought more suitable to our holy profession, that all be delayed till such time as the bishops can meet, to compose a prayer suitable to the occasion? This by no means would have passed for sound divinity with the Heathen mariners, in Jonah's case: for "they cried every man to his god," in such words, we may be assured, as the terror of the present Providence did suggest;—and the shipmaster said to Jonah, "Arise, call upon thy God," Jonah i. 5. 6.

The apostle bears witness, that the Holy Spirit assists Christians in prayer, Rom. viii. 26. He does so, by suggesting fit matter for prayer; by discovering to them their sins, John xvi. 7. 8. their wants, their spiritual plagues and soul-distempers; with the relief and supplies which are treasured up for them in Christ, and in the promises of God's grace, John xiv. 16. 17. 26.; as also, by exciting their faith in the promises of God, and raising their desires after the blessings promised.

We are commanded of God to "pray in the "Holy Ghost," Jude 20. And our Saviour himself

has assured us, that our "heavenly Father shall give "the Holy Spirit to them that ask him," Luke xi. 13. Why then should we doubt of God's giving us that assistance of his Spirit which he has promised, when, in faith, we pray to him for it?

THOSE who have made a diligent and narrow search into antiquity, have not been able to produce any thing that carries in it so much as a plausible appearance of evidence, or proof, that, in the three first ages of the church, forms of prayer were enjoined, or so much as used. Nothing can be alledged from thence concerning liturgies, concerning written prayers, or the reading of prayers in the church; nay, we have many considerable testimonies of the ancients to the contrary.

As to the Lord's prayer, our Saviour delivers it, Matth. vi. not as a set form, but as a pattern of prayer: "After this manner pray ye;" not in these express words, but to this purpose. And this is an explanation of what he elsewhere saith, Luke xi. "When ye pray, say, Our Father," &c.; that is, after this manner, or to this purpose. Our Lord sent out the disciples to preach, with this word of command, Matth. x. 7. "Preach, saying, The kingdom "of heaven is at hand:" but no thinking man can imagine that they were tied to those very words, and were to say nothing else. No; as this was given for a text, or theme to preach by, so the other was given for a pattern to pray by. We do not find that any of Christ's disciples or apostles did use these very words in prayer: nay, we find, that, in their prayers, which we read of in scripture, they used other words; which shews, that they were not tied to the Lord's prayer as a form, but were to be instructed and di-

rected by it as a pattern of prayer. And this is confirmed, by what the apostle Paul signifies, Rom. viii. that he knew not what to pray for, but as the Spirit gave him assistance: which shews, that he was not tied to this as a set form, else he had known what to pray for, and what words to use in prayer.

This prayer transcends all human compositures; being, as to the composure of it, the *Lord's prayer*. It contains a summary of all our wants: it lays the ground of faith for receiving all gracious supplies: it is a directory for all our prayers; and the words it is conceived in may be used in prayer, as occasion offers, as well as any other words of sacred writ. But to repeat it at the conclusion of our prayers, as if those expres words put a sanctity and value upon our prayers, cannot be excused from superstition. No: it is not the sound of words; but it is the name of Christ, his righteousness, his merit and mediation;—which is the perfuming incense that comes up to heaven with the prayers of all saints.

And how shall we excuse ourselves from symbolizing with the Romish worship, by imposing it for a set form, as they do, without any warrant from the word of God for so doing; by an often repetition of the same form; so that, in cathedral services, it is said or sung ten or twelve times a-day,—contrary to Christ's expres words, that when we pray, we should "not use vain repetitions, as the Heathens do," Matth. vi. 7.: and by singing this prayer in cathedrals, by responses of priest and people with music; without the least divine authority for such song-praying, or for instrumental music in churches?

Mr Calderwood, in his *Altare Damascenum*

p. 112. &c. tells us, That from three Romish channels was the English service collected together; namely, 1. From the *Breviary*, out of which the common prayers are taken: 2. From *Pitnal*, or *Book of Rites*; out of which the administration of the sacraments, burial, matrimony, and visitation of the sick, are taken: 3. From the *Mass-book*; out of which the consecration of the Lord's supper, collects, gospels, and epistles, are taken.

And it is manifest, that the church of England symbolizes with the Papists as to the sign of the cross in baptism; as to their feasts, vigils, fasts, rites, and ceremonies.

But the second commandment doth prohibit all devising, commanding, or using any religious worship, not instituted by God himself. And, seeing in the fourth commandment, the Lord hath said, "Six "days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work,"—it must be unwarrantable for men to impose a yoke of holidays, of their own invention, upon the consciences of men. The Lord Jesus Christ is the alone Lawgiver and King in his church; and his office-bearers are to teach his people to observe all things whatsoever he hath commanded; and not what men take upon themselves, of their own head, to command, Matth. xxviii. 20. And seeing they have no authority from Christ for such impositions upon the consciences of his church and people, their attempting it must be an awful usurpation, for which the devisers and imposers must be accountable to him one day.

The retaining of that corruption in worship,—wherein we symbolize with the Papists, is a mean for bringing the people back to Popery. This may, in

God's righteous judgment, be the trial of theſe lands, for our not receiving the truth in the love of it, and for all our hainous ſins unrepented of. Though we hope that God, of his infinite mercy, ſhall, in the iſſue, baffle all the plots and contrivances of the enemies of the Proteſtant ſucceſſion; yet the advancement of religion, and the knowledge of God among the people, with a reformation from Popiſh ceremonies, would, by the divine bleſſing, be the beſt bulwark and defence againſt the invaſion of a Popiſh pretender, with an inundation of Popiſh idolatry and ſuperſtition.

MAY the Lord, for Chriſt's ſake, mercifully interpoſe in the ſovereignty of his grace, by turning us all from our evil ways to himſelf: for if this awful judgment break in upon us, all that is valuable to us, as men and Chriſtians, muſt, and will of courſe be gone; and we ſhall be under the tremendous marks of the Lord's anger, in the moſt diſmal circumſtances of any nation under heaven.

BUT ſince we yet enjoy the ineſtimable bleſſing of the Proteſtant religion, and live under the beſt modelled government in the known world, under the moſt mild adminiſtration, and under the beſt of kings, the father of his people, whoſe declared ſentiments are, that he looks upon the happineſs of his ſubjects, their privileges and welfare, as inſeparable from the dignity of his crown; we ought therefore, from all principles of religion, loyalty, and ſelf-intereſt itſelf, to be excited to ſet about reformation, both in our private and public capacities; and that in a vigorous manner, under the divine conduct, all ranks acting their part, according to the different ſpheres wherein Providence hath placed them.

3. With reſpect to diſcipline, it may be conſidered, that as no civil ſociety can ſubſiſt without the execution of laws, ſo the church cannot ſubſiſt without diſcipline.

The church of the Jews had their diſcipline; our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has inſtituted diſcipline for his church under the New Teſtament, and preſcribed rules for the exerciſe of it. The primitive church, in the firſt three centuries, obſerved a ſtrict exerciſe of diſcipline; and other reformed churches have their diſcipline: but the eſtabliſhed church of England has, properly ſpeaking, no diſcipline at all.

As there are about ten thouſand pariſhes in England, of theſe but a very few only have the power of chuſing their own paſtors, all the reſt have rectors or vicars intruded upon them; and, whether they will or not, are committed to the care of a Preſbyter choſen by a ſtranger. The right of patronage is bought and ſold. Ignorant men, if they are but rich, often get the beſt benefices: and, when they have got the livings, they are not bound to take care of the flock themſelves; but they may leave it to any ſorry curate who will do it cheapeſt. Yea, ſometimes a miniſter will have the benefices of two or three pariſhes, who will not take the paſtoral care of one.

An action lies againſt the miniſter, who ſhall refuſe the ſacrament to ſuch whom he knows to be wicked men, and every way unqualified.

Presbyters, though they are not thought worthy to be judges of offences committed which are cenſurable, yet are obliged to publiſh, in their congregations, the lay chancellor's ſentences of excommuni-

cation; which they are bound with an implicit faith to take for good, and as such to publish them to the people.

And a commutation of penance is admitted, unknown to the scriptures, and to the primitive church, which all sober men blush at; whereby persons of a superior rank, whose honour (as they imagine) would suffer by a public penance, are allowed to ransom themselves from the reproach of it by a sum of money, for being bestowed on the poor, or the buildings of the church. But this is a method dishonouring to God, and a reproach to our holy religion; a method which is no way authorised in the holy scriptures for maintaining the poor, or supporting the worship of God; but the quite contrary is declared by them. Should we not then bemoan the case of many souls, whom we see every day running headlong to all destruction and perdition, for want of that discipline which the Lord Christ hath instituted! And therefore (as the church in the liturgy doth upon Ash-Wednesday pray once a-year) we desire to be helped to pray every day, that "godly discipline may be "restored."

4. As to the supremacy, it may be observed, that it is absolutely inconsistent with the word of God, being subversive of the order and government of Christ's institution. For Christ himself is the alone King and Head of his church, which is his body mystical, Eph. i. 22. 23.; and the Father has set him as King upon mount Zion, the hill of his holiness, Psal. ii. 6.

The church can have no visible head upon the earth. The Pope cannot be so; for Peter, from

whom he pretends to derive his power, never had or claimed such a prerogative; and it is plain that the keys were given to church-officers *in collegio*. Pastors, or the elders that labour in the word and doctrine, being the highest officers of the Christian church which are mentioned in the scriptures; and a parity of power and authority, honour and dignity, being lodged in them, it is very manifest, that they can have no visible ecclesiastical head. And to make the civil magistrate the head of the church, were to overthrow the kingdom of Christ, by making its administration wholly carnal and earthly; whereas the kingdom of Christ is spiritual, and not of this world: yea, it were to suppose the church to be a monster; seeing a spiritual body with an earthly head, must be such, in the nature of the thing.

Christ alone is the King and Head of his church, his spiritual kingdom. It was intimated in the very first promise, that the Messiah was to bear rule. Balaam saw the star of Jacob with a sceptre for government. And, according to Jacob's prophecy, Judah was to enjoy the sceptre and lawgiver till Shiloh came; to whom the gathering of the people should be. His kingdom was more fully revealed to David and the prophets. Upon his birth, he is proclaimed "Christ the Lord," Luke ii. 11. And the wise men, who had "seen his star in the east," and came to worship him, proposed this question to the sanhedrim, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? "for we have seen his star in the east, and are come "to worship him," Matth. ii. 1. 2. &c.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, as the true God and Creator of the world, is King and Lord of the same, by an original underived right; and so he hath the

supreme power over it. This is the essential kingdom, common to the three persons of the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. He has likewise a mediatory kingdom, which he holds of his Father, by the tenor of the covenant of grace; as is declared, Is. ix. 6. Psal. ii. 6. Eph. iv. 8. 11. 12. and i. 21.—23. And the highest order of created beings were no more fit to bear this office, than to produce another world out of nothing. For as in the administration of this kingdom, the immortal souls of men were to be the subjects of this government; so the choicest blessings of the new covenant were to be disposed of and bestowed by him freely.

In subserviency to this mediatory kingdom, the kingdom of Providence throughout the world was likewise committed to him; so that he rules not only over his willing subjects, but also in the midst of his enemies: "For the Father loveth the Son, and hath "given all things into his hand," John iii. 35.—But in a special manner, he is King and Head of his church, Eph. ii. 20. *&c.* and iv. 8. 11. 12. As such, he institutes all ordinances, sends out all church-officers, and furnishes them with all necessary gifts for the work of the ministry. He is not only an head of influences to his church, but also he is a ruling and governing head, Eph. v. 23. 24. And he hath appointed courts of judicature for the government of his kingdom, both supreme and subordinate, Acts xv. 1 Tim. iv. 14.; which are to meet and proceed in his name, seeing he has promised to be in the midst of them; and that "what they bind on earth, shall "be bound in heaven."—Wherefore chancellors, and others in their courts, who are perfect laymen, not invested with any ecclesiastical office by Christ,—

cannot possibly have the power of excommunication and absolution.

Christ is the alone monarch in his church; and the power of his office-bearers is only ministerial. He is the origin of all church power and authority; all church-laws are enacted by him,—being only explained, published, and declared by the officers of his house: and all church-censures are dispensed in his name. As King of Zion, and Head of his church, he dispenseth all grace, in the use of the means of his own appointment.——From all which it is manifest, that the civil magistrate cannot be the fountain of ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction: and therefore he cannot, according to any rule whatsoever, derive an ecclesiastical power to others; nor can, according to the word, commit the judgment of ecclesiastical matters to laymen.

We do not deny the civil magistrate any power which the holy scriptures allow to him. For as his office is an ordinance of God, and his person is signally impressed with a special character of majestic authority, in a due subordination to him who is Lord over all, he should be honoured, subjected to, and obeyed. And we grant that the Christian magistrate, according to his external power in ecclesiastical matters, may call occasional meetings of church-officers to reason and debate matters before him; that he may, *pro re nata*, convocate ecclesiastical synods for concluding church affairs, according to the scripture; that, for his own information, he may be present in those synods, and, according to his discretive judgment, give his sanction to such decrees as are agreeable to the word of God;—and all this without infringing upon the intrinsic power of the

church, in ordinary cases, to indict her own times or places of meeting, as occasion or necessity shall require: that all ecclesiastical persons are subjected to his authority and jurisdiction in all civil matters; that, in case of negligence, he may command all, and even ministers, to perform their respective duties: and that he has a power, objectively ecclesiastical, about church-affairs; though he has not a power formally ecclesiastical, whereby he may exercise acts purely spiritual, and proper to church-officers.

For Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Saviour, has a kingdom distinct from the kingdoms of this world; ecclesiastical power being derived from Christ as Mediator, but civil power and authority from God as Creator. Ecclesiastical jurisdiction leans entirely upon revealed religion, while civil government is originally founded upon the light and law of nature;—but is supported, directed, and authorised likewise by the written word, where the light of the gospel doth shine. Civil government is common to all men, as men; the other is peculiar to those who profess the true God. The form of the one may be monarchical, the other not; the object of the one is civil, the other is spiritual; the nature of the one, and manner of exercising its power, is magisterial, the other ministerial: the acts and sentences of the one are corporal, the other spiritual. The immediate rule of exercising the one is the laws of the land; but the rule of the other is the word of God, and ecclesiastical constitutions agreeable thereto. The one is performed in the name of the supreme magistrate, the other in the name of Jesus Christ. The immediate end of the one is the good of the commonwealth; of the other, the good of immortal souls. And these governments, though distinct and collateral, being of

different kinds, are not inconſiſtent one with another; and being both God's ordinances, they are not prejudicial the one to the other, but corroborate and ſtrengthen one another. Any oppoſition which at any time appears of the one to the other, muſt be aſcribed to our corruptions, and not to God's inſtitutions, which are all moſt holy and wiſe.

As the kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is not of this world, and as he himſelf has inſtituted all ordinances to be obſerved in his church; ſo every ordinance that hath not his inſtitution, is ſuperſtitious, impeaching his wiſdom and care for his church. Of this ſort are all the inventions of men in the worſhip of God, which prevail among thoſe of the hierarchy: and of the ſame ſort are all the ſuperſtitions impoſed upon the world, by the idolatrous church of Rome; ſuch as the worſhipping of the images of Chriſt and of the ſaints; their idolatrous maſs and abſurd tranſubſtantiation; their deluſion of purgatory and indulgences; their fictitious ſacraments; their efficacy from the work itſelf performed; together with innumerable other corruptions and additions to the inſtitutions of Jeſus Chriſt, condemned by the word of God.

POPERY began with additions to Chriſt's inſtitutions; and then proceeded to act in a direct contradiction to the word of God; particularly, by making images or repreſentations of God, of the Trinity, and of Chriſt,—in a direct contradiction to the ſecond commandment; by which we are expreſsly prohibited, not only to worſhip, but ſo much as to make or have any likeneſs or viſible repreſentation of the object of our worſhip. Neither angels nor men, not even all the tribe of created beings, can

possibly, with their utmost art, draw any visible representation of him who is invisible, Heb. xi. 27.; of God, who is a Spirit,—in and of himself infinite in being, blessedness, glory, and perfection, John iv. 24.: nor can they frame the faintest emblem of the great God our Saviour, "who is the blessed and "only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of "lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in "the light which no man can approach unto, whom "no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be ho-"nour and power everlasting. Amen," 1 Tim. vi. 15. 16. Who then, without denying himself to be a reasonable creature, can possibly pretend to draw a visible representation of the Lord Jesus Christ; who only hath immortality by an original nnderived right,—who is the fountain of all being and perfection, as one God with the Father and the Holy Ghost? of him, who dwelleth in that light of infinite perfection and ineffable glory, to which no created being can approach? of him, whom no man hath seen, nor can see? And seeing it is impossible for men to make any visible representation of the Lord Jesus Christ, in his person, as Emmanuel, God with us, it is absurd for them to pretend to make any representation of his human nature apart,—seeing it subsists in the person of the Son of God, and no where else, and never did nor shall otherwise subsist: so that men by such a representation of him, do not represent the Lord Jesus Christ, but an idol of their own depraved imagination. Christ, in his human nature, is now glorified; and we cannot have any conception of the glory, in which that humanity which he assumed doth now shine. Let us therefore beware of all carnal imaginations about the great God our Saviour; but let

ns think of him as a divine perſon, according to the deſcription he gives of himſelf in his word.

And our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath not only inſtituted all the ordinances of his kingdom, for bringing ſinners perſonally into the covenant of grace, and for confirming thoſe that are in it; but he likewiſe rules and governs his true loyal ſubjects, the government being upon his ſhoulders: and he not only gives the laws of his kingdom externally in the word, but he writes them in their hearts. He ſubdues them to himſelf in the day of his power, and preſerves them to his heavenly kingdom; he refreſhes their ſouls with the manifeſtations of his favour and love, in the way of duty; and he corrects them, when they forſake the rule of his word. He protects and defends them from the attacks and inſults of their enemies, he will, in due time, give them the victory, and will put them into full poſſeſſion of the kingdom, prepared for them before the foundation of the world.

The higeſt heavens are the magnificent palace and royal reſidence of this great King; thouſands of thouſands miniſter unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtand before him. The church militant and triumphant do adore him, while all the hoſts of angels pay homage to him, and bow before him. And ſeeing he is our Lord, let us worſhip him, who is the true God and eternal life, the King of Zion, and the Governor among the nations.

We now conclude this diſcourſe with an exhortation to all ranks.——Let us all be exhorted and excited to return unto the Lord, in the exerciſe of faith, goſpel-repentance, and reformation; that ſo,

in the ſovereignty of God's grace, our threatened ruin and deſolation may be prevented.

THUS ſaith the Lord, "O Iſrael, return unto the "Lord thy God, for thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity. Put away the evil of your doings from be- "fore mine eyes; ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye ſhall eat the good "of the land; but if ye refuſe and rebel, ye ſhall "be devoured with the ſword: for the mouth of "the Lord hath ſpoken it. Wherefore repent, and "turn yourſelves from all your tranſgreſſions; ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruin," Hoſ. xiv. 1. Iſ. i. 16. 17. 19. 20. Ezek. xviii. 30.

"REPENT, and believe the goſpel; for the pro- "miſe is unto you and to your children, and to all "that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our "God ſhall call." The promiſe is, "For mine ho- "ly name's ſake," my name, as it is manifeſted and glorified in Chriſt, "ye ſhall be my people, and I "will be your God." The promiſe is to you; it is ſpoken to you; though many of you have never yet, by faith, heard the heavenly and divine voice of the infinite Speaker. The promiſe is left to you, to be believed and truſted to. "Take heed therefore, ſee- "ing there is a promiſe left us of entering into his "reſt, leſt any of you ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it "by unbelief." We publiſh the record of God; to be believed and appropriated by the particular application of faith, —— that God giveth to you eternal life; and this life is in his Son: that to you the Son of God "is given, whoſe name is Wonderful, Coun- "ſellor, The Mighty God, The Everlaſting Father, "and, The Prince of Peace:" that "to you is born "in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Chriſt

"the Lord;" and that to you, who are loſt and periſhing ſinners of Adam's family, "is the word "of this ſalvation ſent." Chriſt is given to you for your Saviour: he ſtands at the door and knocks, for faith's acceſs to your ſouls. He offers himſelf to you, and to every one of you, as "the Saviour of "the world," as able and willing to ſave you from your ſins.

MAKE haſte then, and receive him joyfully; for this day is ſalvation come to your houſe; this day is ſalvation come to your ſoul, even the God of ſalvation. Thus ſaith the Lord, "Other ſheep I have "which are not of this fold: them alſo I muſt bring, "and they ſhall hear my voice. Unto you, O men, "I call; and my voice is to the ſons of men. I am "the Lord thy God; thou ſhalt have no other gods "before me," Luke xix. 5. 6. 9. John x. 16. Prov. viii. 4. Exod. xx. 2. 3.

WHY then do ye ſtand at a diſtance from Chriſt, ſeeing he calleth you to come to him, and offereth himſelf, with all his fulneſs of grace, to you? Is it becauſe ye are guilty ſinners? Then he publiſhes his indemnity to you: "I, even I am he that blotteth "out your tranſgreſſions, for mine own ſake." Is it becauſe ye are morally polluted by ſin, under a burden of guilt and filthineſs, binding you over to the avenging wrath of God? Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts to you,—"Then will I ſprinkle clean water "upon you, and ye ſhall be clean: from all your "filthineſs, and from all your idols will I cleanſe "you." Is it becauſe ye have the old unrenewed heart ſtanding in your way? Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts,—"A new heart alſo will I give you, and a "new ſpirit will I put within you." Are ye ob-

jecting that ye have an hard impenitent heart, and cannot be affected for all your sins, though they are innumerable, and accompanied with great aggravations? Thus saith the Lord,—"I will take away "the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you "an heart of flesh." Are ye objecting that his law is an holy law, and ye have unholy hearts; and though ye would essay to receive Christ, by believing upon him, ye will never be able to walk in his statutes, and keep his judgments? Thus saith the Lord of hosts, "I will put my Spirit within you, and "cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep "my judgments, and do them." Again, Are ye objecting that your sins are not like the sins of others, they are so great and so highly aggravated? Thus saith the Lord,—"Though your sins be as "scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though "they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Look to a promising God, that he may help your unbelief, and may work in you the work of faith with power; for he has said, "Your God will come "and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall "be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be un-"stopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, "and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wil-"derness shall waters break out, and streams in the "desart.—They shall see the glory of the Lord, "and the excellency of our God," Is. xxxv. 2. 4. 5. 6. And depending upon him, who maketh the deaf to hear spiritually, essay a complying with his call of grace: "Incline your ear," saith he, "and "come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live." Hear in the strength of grace: essay to mingle faith with God's word of promise, saying, "I will be-"trothe thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betrothe

"thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, "and in loving-kindness, and in mercies: I will e- "ven betrothe thee unto me in faithfulness; and "thou shalt know the Lord." And, "Thou shalt "call me Ishi, my husband; and shalt call me no "more Baali," Is. lv. 3. Hos. ii. 16. 19. 20.

Let every one be exhorted to repentance, and personal reformation. "Let the wicked forsake his "way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and "let him return unto the Lord, and he will have "mercy upon him." Let each man repent of his wickedness, saying, "What have I done?" Let us be humbled deeply before God, for the evil we have done; and put away the evil of our doings. Let us not only put away and refrain from the gross acts of sin, which are odious to all sober-thinking men; but let us mortify, through the grace of the divine Spirit, the inward habits and inclination to sin, which are abominable in the sight of God: and, for that end, let us improve the promises of heart-renovation: Ezek. xviii. 31. 32. and xxxvi. 26.; "Make you a new heart, and a new spirit; for, "why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Attempts at reformation must be made in a way of looking to the Lord for regeneration and heart-renovation; for, "a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." Without the new nature, men are spiritually dead, and will die eternally: "Make you a new heart; "for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" The precept thus cometh to us, for engaging us to betake ourselves to the grace of God, exhibited to us in the promise: "A new heart also will I give you, "and a new spirit will I put within you."

And let all invested with power and authority,

use their utmost endeavours for public and national reformation.——Kings, princes, nobles, great men, and judges of the earth, are called to pay homage to Christ, in their endeavours after national reformation; and in personal reformation, to be good examples to " all their inferiors: " Praise the Lord, kings of the " earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the " earth. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for " his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the " earth and heaven," Psal. cxlviii. 7. 11. 13.

They ought to praise him, by believing in him; putting their trust and confidence in him, who is the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea: to praise him, by esteeming and loving him above all persons and things; by making his glory and honour their end in all their actions; by making his word their rule; by taking care, that every thing in the house of the God of heaven be done according to the will of the God of heaven; by putting their hand to reformation-work, especially in times of universal corruption and deformation;—and subordinating all their concerns to the glory of God, and the advancement of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is " not of this " world."

It is the Lord that " setteth up kings;" and it is he that " giveth salvation unto kings:" and his *word* is to be the rule in their administration in their kingdoms, Dan. ii. 21. Psal. cxliv. 10. Deut. xvii. 18. 19. And as they must all " die like men;" so they must give an account of themselves to God about all that they have done in the body,—as well as those who move in a lower sphere of action. To great men much is given, and of them the more will be requi-

red. They must not only answer for their personal sins, but for the sins of their high rank and character; wherein they have neglected means for general reformation; having involved themselves in sinful compliances, with the corruptions of the times, and have been a snare to others that way.

And even those in the lowest circumstances of life are called upon to contribute their endeavours for reformation. The meanest subject ought to be exercised about personal reformation: and if, through grace, he himself is reformed, general reformation is so far begun, that one is reformed, and has returned to the Lord. He may, under the influence of the Spirit of God, lament after the Lord,—and make confession to the Lord God of our fathers of his own sins, and of the sins of these lands: pouring out his heart daily to the Lord, that he may arise, and have mercy upon Zion, that the time to favour her may come; that he may pour out his Spirit upon our Sovereign King George and the royal family, with the peers and great men of the kingdom; that he may humble them for their personal sins, and their accession to the public sins, and corruptions of these lands: that the Lord may turn their hearts to himself, incline them to set about a work of reformation, and dispose them to favour his righteous cause. Without this, armies and navies will not be a defence to us, in the day of the Lord's wrath and controversy with us.

Let us trust in the great Intercessor within the vail. "Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, "O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have "mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, "against which thou hast had indignation these three-"score and ten years? And the Lord answered the

" angel," (Christ the angel of the covenant), " with " good words, and comfortable words: Thus saith " the Lord, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies," Zech. i. 12. 13. 16.

EZEK. vii. 2. 15.

——*Thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel, An* END. *The end is come upon the four corners of the land.——The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within. He that is in the field, shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.*

[The fifth discourse on this subject.]

THE method which we proposed for discoursing this subject, when we entered upon it, was, by divine assistance, 1. To notice a few of the signs which appear in our days, of the near approach of a national calamity upon these lands. 2. To speak a little of the awfulness of these approaching judgments. Though we can by no means make a full enumeration of the sins and abominations of these times, yet having given an hint at some of them, we now proceed, as directed,

SECONDLY, To speak a little of the awfulness of these approaching judgments, as being " an END, the " end that is come upon the four corners of the land:" when " he that is in the field, shall die with the " sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pesti- " lence shall devour him." And,

1. THE awfulness thereof will appear, if, with at-

tention and veneration, we consider the infinitely holy and righteous Author of those desolating judgments which are approaching upon these lands, whose trespasses are grown up unto the heavens: "Thus saith "the LORD GOD unto the land of Israel, An END, "the end is come upon the four corners of the land."

"THE Lord is known by the judgment which he "executeth," Psal. ix. 16. And, "he is strong that "executeth his word; for the day of the Lord is "great, and very terrible; and who can abide it?" Joel ii. 11. The glory of God is manifested, in executing his judgments even upon the Heathen for their sins; and still more in visiting the iniquities of a professing people upon them, whose transgressions are more aggravated in his sight. Thus the Lord denounceth his judgment against Gog and Magog, Ezek. xxxix. 17. 18.—"Speak unto every feathered "fowl, and to every beast of the field,—Gather "yourselves on every side to my sacrifice!—Ye shall "eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood "of the princes of the earth." And he says, vers. 21.—"I will set my glory among the Heathen, and "all the Heathen shall see my judgment that I have "executed, and my hand that I have laid upon "them." Thus are men to learn, that the God of Israel is the only true God; glorious in holiness, and fearful in the judgments which he executeth against the sins and abominations of the children of men.

WHEN a people are incorrigible, or refuse to be reformed by lesser judgments, the Lord takes the work in hand himself more immediately, and executes his judgments more awfully: Hos. v. 12. 13. 14. He had been "unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of "Judah as rottenness;"——that is, he had inflicted

leſſer and gradual judgments, correcting them, and bringing them down, as the moth in cloth, and as a worm in wood, which inſenſibly waſtes and deſtroys: yet they were not reclaimed, by turning to the Lord, but ſent to the Aſſyrian, who could not heal them of their wound. Upon this the Lord threatens more terrible judgments.——"I will be unto Ephraim as "a lion, and as a young lion to the houſe of Judah. "I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, "and none ſhall reſcue him."

THERE is a more immediate work of God in ſome judgments than in others. "I will be unto Ephraim "as a lion; I, even I, will tear and go away." Though we have been viſited with God's leſſer judgments, and have found ourſelves going down the ſtream, and that we are behind-hand in our affairs; yet, like Ephraim, when we have ſeen our wound, we have not ſeen our ſins, which are the cauſe of it; nor are our unbelieving and carnal hearts brought to acknowledge humbly the righteous hand of God in our troubles; and to return to a ſmiting God, in the exerciſe of faith, with goſpel-repentance and reformation.

AND becauſe of our ſins, ſeeing we hold faſt iniquity, and refuſe to be reformed,—the "Lord of "hoſts himſelf doth muſter the hoſt of the battle; "and, in righteouſneſs, he doth judge and make war." He produces the grounds of his holy controverſy with us, a people laden with iniquity: Hoſ. v. 1. "Hear ye this, O prieſts; and hearken, ye houſe of "Iſrael, and give ye ear, O houſe of the king: for "judgment is toward you, becauſe ye have been a "ſnare on Mizpah, and a net ſpread upon Tabor." Verſ. 4. "They will not frame their doings, to turn "unto their God." Verſ. 7. "They have dealt "treacherouſly againſt the Lord." Verſ. 10. "The

"princes of Judah were like them that remove the "bound: therefore I will pour out my wrath upon "them like water. Verſ. 11. "Ephraim is oppreſſed, "and broken in judgment; becauſe he willingly "walked after the commandment."

THE indictment is laid againſt all ranks and degrees of men in theſe lands; againſt rulers, whether eccleſiaſtical or civil,—and againſt all who ſtand in a ſubordination to them. They are all involved in the national guilt, and they may all expect to ſhare in the national judgments. Neither the dignity of the great, nor the meanneſs of the multitude, will be their exemption. Jeroboam and his ſucceſſors corrupted the worſhip of God, contrary to the vows which they were under to the Moſt High; and they, with the prieſts and the great men in the kingdom, were a ſnare to the multitude,—by their edicts, by defending and patroniſing the corruptions of the times, and by their bad example: yet the people were cut off from making it their plea, that they were miſled by their rulers. No ſuch plea could be admitted, but they behoved to ſhare in the common calamity: not only becauſe they walked after the commandment of men, in oppoſition to the commandment of God, by a blind obedience to human authority;—but alſo becauſe they walked willingly after the commandment; from a ſecret averſion to the pure worſhip of God, with a ſtrong bias to corrupt worſhip and ſuperſtition. It muſt be an awful attack upon the authority of God, and all his infinite perfections, to comply with the commandments of men that thwart the commandments of God. Both thoſe who thus command, and thoſe who obey, are ripened for the day of God's viſitation.

And the indictment is so evidently against us in these lands, as to the above, and other particulars in this chapter, that they may run who read it. Let us then be alarmed with the warning given us by the Lord himself: "Because I will do this unto thee," bring nameless judgments upon thee, "prepare to "meet thy God, O Israel."

2. The awfulness of these approaching judgments doth appear, from the moving metaphorical descriptions of them in the word of truth: "Now, therefore, "behold the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters "of the river, strong and many, even the king of "Assyria, and all his glory; and he shall come up "over all his channels, and go over all his banks," Is. viii. 7. The invasion which the king of Assyria was to make upon Judah, was to be of the nature of a flood, deluge, or inundation; and therefore most dangerous, terrible, and destructive to the inhabitants of the land. In the extent and universality of it, it was to pass through the whole land of Judah; to "come up over all his channels, and to go over "all his banks:" and such a flood of judgments are we threatened with at this day.

Again, these judgments are compared to a fire of the Lord's kindling: Ezek. xx. 47.—"Thus saith "the Lord God, Behold, I will kindle a fire in "thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, "and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be "quenched, and all faces, from the south to the north, "shall be burnt therein." All those judgments, which shall consume both city and country, are signified by this fire. It will be a fire of God's own kindling: and all flesh shall see, by the desolations which it will make, and by considering the sins of

these lands which have made them fewel for this fire, —that it is the Lord who has kindled it, verſ. 48. as a juſt avenger of his own injured honour. This conflagration ſhall be general; all orders and degrees of men ſhall be devoured by it; young and old, rich and poor, high and low: "it ſhall devour every "green tree, and every dry tree."

THESE judgments are likewiſe compared to a furnace: Ezek. xxii. 18. 22. "The houſe of Iſrael is "to me become droſs; all they are braſs, and tin, "and iron, and lead, in the midſt of the furnace. "As ſilver is melted in the midſt of the furnace, ſo "ſhall ye be melted; and ye ſhall know that I the "Lord have poured out my fury upon you." This generation is become braſs; impudent in their wickedneſs: they are brazen-faced, and cannot bluſh at their ſin, but glory in their ſhame: they are as iron for obduration, hardneſs of heart, and impenitency; and as lead, ſottiſh and ſtupid, pliable to evil; yet heavy, and not moveable to any thing that is good. Theſe different ſorts of metal ſhall be melted by a complication of judgments, as by a raging fire: the various ſorts of ſinners ſhall be melted down together, and united in a common overthrow, as braſs and lead in the ſame furnace. And ſeeing we are become droſs, what can we expect, but that we ſhall be put away and conſumed? Pſal. cxix. 119.

THESE judgments are likewiſe called the "days of "viſitation:" "The days of viſitation are come; the "days of recompence are come; Iſrael ſhall know it," Hoſ. ix. 7. "And what will ye do in the day of vi"ſitation, and in the deſolation which ſhall come "from far? To whom will ye flee for help? and where "will ye leave your glory?" Iſ. x. 3. They are call-

ed "the day of the Lord," Amos v. 18. and, "the "day of the Lord's anger," Lam. ii. 22. "In the "day of the Lord's anger none escaped nor remained. "Those that I have swaddled and brought up, hath "mine enemy consumed."

THE day of God's judgments is both a day of visitation, in which mens sins will be inquired into, and brought to light; and a day of recompence, in which a reward will be given to every man according to his work. This day of visitation and recompence is come, is hastening on apace; it is sure, it is near, as if it were already come: and, when it is come, "Israel "shall know it;" shall be made to know that by sad experience, which they would not know by instruction, nor believe, when warned of its approaching to them. And this day is come, "for the multitude of "their iniquity," Hos. ix. 7.; which, in contempt of the divine law, they persisted in; and "for their "great hatred" of those who called them to their duty, and warned them of their danger.

AND this day of visitation that cometh, is called "the day of the Lord's anger," wherein "none e-"scaped," Lam. ii. 22. Such a day we may expect if we do not return unto the Lord; a day wherein these lands, and particularly the principal cities, shall, like Jerusalem, be made a perfect slaughter-house, and none shall escape: a day wherein these sinful lands, that have made themselves like to Jerusalem by their abominations, shall resemble her in their ruin and desolation; and in the mournful circumstances thereof, as described by the prophet in the Lamentations, and particularly in the above chapter, verf. 10. &c.: a day wherein the elders, that sat upon the thrones of David, are made to "sit upon the ground;"

wherein thoſe who uſed to dreſs themſelves richly, and to walk with "ſtretched-forth necks," are humbled; "The virgins of Jeruſalem hang down their "heads to the ground," and they are made to know ſorrow, who ſeemed to bid defiance to it. Multitudes periſh by famine; the children die for hunger in their mothers arms, verſ. 11. 12. And multitudes fall by the ſword, which devours one, as well as another; the enemy ſhall ſpare no character, no age nor ſex; "My virgins and my young men are fallen by "the ſword," verſ. 21.

THESE diſmal days of viſitation are haſtening apace; for the Lord "will viſit the iniquity of the fa-"thers upon the children, unto the third and fourth "generation," when they walk in the ſame ſteps of ſuperſtition and wickedneſs with thoſe who were their anceſtors. Will-worſhip, deviſing other means of worſhip than what God hath appointed in his word, with the innumerable ſins and abominations of theſe times, are the juſt cauſes of God's wrath againſt theſe lands; and are evident ſigns that the day of our viſitation is nigh, even at the door, Exod. xx. 5.

3. THE awfulneſs of theſe approaching judgments may appear, from their being deſcribed in the text, as "an END," "The end come upon the four cor-"ners of the land."——The national calamity approaching, is of a moſt lamentable and diſmal nature; it is an end, toward which all the impiety and apoſtaſy of theſe lands have been working, as means to effect it. It is an end, a national ruin and deſtruction.

THE "end is come;" it is near at hand, at the very door. Theſe lands have been long ripening for

it; it has been long a-coming, long threatened, long deferred; but now "the end is come." An impenitent people, who hate to be reformed, can expect nothing elſe, but that judgments, which have been long put off, ſhall be inflicted, for the manifeſtation of divine juſtice, of God's holineſs, and hatred at ſin. Though juſtice is not in all caſes executed againſt the evil works of wicked men in this life, but deferred to the awful retribution of a future ſtate; yet the caſe is otherwiſe with nations and communities. For as all men muſt appear at the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, ſo they will not appear in their national capacities; but every individual for themſelves, to be judged according to what they have done in the body. And hence it is that God doth now chaſtiſe nations upon this earth; as is evident from the ſcripture-accounts of God's judgments, both threatened and inflicted, even upon the Heathen nations, when they corrupted themſelves, and their wickedneſs became great upon the earth.

And we may fear that theſe judgments ſhall be univerſal; for "the end is come upon the four corners "of the land." No part of the land ſhall eſcape, not even that which lies moſt remote; for "the end "is come upon the four corners of the land;" and it is the "end of all fleſh. Who then ſhall live, when "the Lord doth this?"

And the national calamity ſhall be inevitable. None of thoſe marked for death, ſhall eſcape; and thoſe that fall, ſhall not be lamented. Theſe judgments ſhall bear down all before them, without remedy, both in town and country. Men ſhall be ſafe no where; for "he that is in the field, ſhall die with the "ſword;"—every field ſhall be "a field of blood;

" and he that is in the city," shall not find protection there; but " famine and pestilence shall devour him." Sin hath prodigiously abounded both in city and country; and therefore in both wasting desolations shall be made.

How dreadful shall our judgments be, when these lands shall be a field of blood; when the slain shall lie behind the slayers, as ever the sheaves lay behind the reapers in time of harvest! when the cities that were full of people, shall sit solitary, because they have grievously sinned against the Lord; when showers of blood shall wash our streets; when no noise shall be heard, but the cries and groans of gasping dying men; when your kindred shall be slain in one place, and yourselves in another; when our houses shall be burnt with fire; and, if any remain, the enemy shall be house-keeper,—because we have sinned ourselves out of our possessions: when an inundation of Popery shall overspread these lands;—when our temple-songs shall be turned into howlings; when conscience shall be inthralled, God's holy ordinances removed, and men obliged to comply with idolatry and corruptions, imposed by the enemy;—or to resist unto blood, in the strength of grace, striving against sin, not loving their lives unto the death.

" For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and " for the sins of the house of Israel;" and because " the earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, " who have transgressed the laws, changed the ordi- " nances, broken the everlasting covenant," Micah i. 5. Is. xxiv. 5.

We shall now conclude these discourses with some exhortations and directions.

I. The exhortation is, to prepare for a day of calamity, for suffering and shaking times.——The Lord sees it meet that his people be exercised with shaking trials hereaway;—to put a greater difference betwixt earth and heaven; to humble them, and discover the corruptions of their own hearts unto them; to wean them from this world, and to try their graces; as also, to make them esteem Christ more, and improve him daily, as made of God unto them "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,"—that they may, by faith, cleave to God, as their portion, and to Christ, as their refuge, Is. xxxii. 2.

Ye may meet with shaking providences, and with shaking persecution, for the cause of Christ: John xvi. 2. 3.—"The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service: and these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." With Paul, you may come to a place where many seas meet: your outward troubles may be attended with inward trials; with desertion, the hidings of God's face, conflicts with temptation, and the power of indwelling sin.

Though it be the Lord's ordinary way to "stay his rough wind in the day of the east wind," and to give a liberal allowance for the cross of Christ; yet he hath not limited himself: and ye are not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial, if ye find, that without are fightings, and within are fears. But "though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion;" and he will, in his own time, "compass you about with songs of deliverance: for many

" are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord " delivereth him out of them all."

THESE awful and trying dispensations may come to such an height, that professors may get severe falls; such as communion-attainments, and former resolutions, will not be sufficient to save or preserve from. Thus it was with Peter, after the first communion, and the strongest resolutions. And these dispensations may be so dark, that ye may be bewildered as to your duty, and lose your way; as the young prophet did, by hearkening to the old, which cost him his life.

AND these trials may be so shocking, that they will not only detect the hypocrisy of many, but will discover corruptions, and the strength of them, which ye thought were not in you, or were mortified long before; yea, such as may darken all your evidences, and try all your graces, your faith, love, patience, and obedience, to purpose.

WE shall now offer a few directions, how to be prepared, through grace, for a day of calamity, for times of suffering.

1. IT should be the concern of professors to have a principle of grace in their hearts, and to have their hearts made sound in God's statutes, Psal. cxix. 80. The soundness of the heart is tried, in a storm of trouble or suffering: and when the heart is not right with God, there is much unstedfastness and fainting at the approach of the trial, Psal. lxxviii. 37.

THE new nature has an heavenly tendency to

God, through Christ Jesus. It aims at nothing but to be with God, to glorify and honour him, to obey him, and to please him, in a way of duty. It goes out in the strength of grace, in the faith of the promise; depending upon Christ alone for acceptance: and it makes the soul break through all reproaches, persecutions, and afflictions, to be at him, and to please him. As water has a tendency to run into the sea,—and though mountains lie in its way, which it cannot remove, it will creep about some other way; so, where there is a principle of grace in the heart, it closes with the command of God in his word;—and, with a dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ, it cleaves to God in a way of duty, in the most trying times, and breaks through all opposition that stands in its way.

2. Some comfortable evidence of our interest in Christ, is a good preparative for a time of calamity and suffering: 2 Tim. i. 12. "For the which cause "I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not "ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and "I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which "I have committed unto him against that day." The faith of God's love to our souls, and the exercise of love to him, Rom. v. 3. 4. will encourage and strengthen us in suffering for Christ, and make us very joyful in all our tribulation.

Wherefore examine the matter, whether ye are in a state of grace or not?—Have ye been born from above? "If any man be in Christ, he is a new crea-"ture," John iii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 17. Is your conversation in heaven? Are ye clothed with holiness and humility, which is the garb of Christ's followers? Those who truly are his disciples, have high and noble aims,

the glory and honour of God: they are acted from a principle of love to God, and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ: they see him who is invisible, and look at those things which are not seen, but are eternal.

Have ye seen an infinite worth and excellency in Christ; that he is the "Plant of renown, and the "chiefest among ten thousand?" Ye have been convinced of your blindness, unbelief, and natural enmity, and of the need of a day of his power, for overcoming the opposition to him, and his grace which is in your hearts. But now, if he hath drawn you with loving-kindness, ye are made to sing,—"I will "bless the Lord who hath given me counsel:" and "whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is "none upon earth that I desire besides thee."

How stand ye affected to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Ransomer come to Zion? "Simon, son of Jonas, "lovest thou me?" Do ye love him and keep his commandments,—and study, in the strength of his grace, to do always those things that please him? Do ye rejoice to see him honoured, and the crown to flourish upon his head,—and cannot but be affected with the indignities which are done to him, in the day wherein ye live? "I beheld the transgressors, and "was grieved; because they kept not thy word," Psal. cxix. 158.

To see him, by faith, in his word, in a duty, or an ordinance,—is this the great comfort of your life? But when he hides his face, are ye troubled? And are ye not sometimes made to long for the immediate vision of him, that ye may see him face to face; and to breathe out your desires, for his glorious ap-

pearance, his second coming; saying, with the church,—"Amen; even so come, Lord Jesus?"

Do ye "believe in the Son of God," and "rejoice "in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh?" Do ye rejoice in what he is,—"Emmanuel, God "with us;" and in what he has done,—that he has "finished transgression, and brought in everlasting "righteousness?" Have ye a superlative esteem of Christ? Do ye "count all things but loss,—that ye "may win Christ, and be found in him, not having "your own righteousness,——but that which is "through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which "is of God by faith?" Phil. iii. 8. 9.

Have ye the characters of the real Christian?—— A real Christian is one who loves God for himself, as well as for his benefits: and that with a supreme love, above all persons and all things. He has an awful and impartial regard to God's commands. He opposes and wrestles against that sin, which, of all others, most easily besets him. He approves and loves the holy law, even in that very point wherein it strikes against his most beloved lust. His hope of heaven engages him in the study of universal holiness; in which he aims at perfection, though he cannot reach it in this life. He serves the Lord, not only in acts of worship, but also in the whole of his conversation; and is, in both, spiritual,—as to the principle, motives, aims, and ends of his service. Yet he sees nothing about himself to trust unto before the Lord; but Christ, in his righteousness and fulness of grace, is the stay of his soul. His confidence is cut off from all that is not Christ, or in Christ, as to the point of justification or acceptance with God; and as to the point of sanctification too: Luke xiv. 26. Psal. cxix. 6.

and xviii. 23. Rom. vii. 22. 23. 1 John iii. 3. Matth. v. 3. Phil. iii. 3.

Now, let such as are the followers of Christ encourage themselves in the Lord; and let them continue with him in his temptation, for "he appointeth to "you a kingdom." Be not discouraged in the prospect of calamities; for all creatures are in the hand of your God and Father, whose kingdom ruleth over all.——If he has any further service for you, he will preserve you, though it should be in dens and caves of the earth, Psal. xci. Heb. xi. 32. &c. And though ye should fall in the common calamity, "your latter "end shall be peace: your joy no man taketh from "you:" your best things, your eternal concerns, are well secured, and are beyond the reach of the world. If he designs to carry you through the flood, to serve him yet in the lower house, "he will be with "you when ye pass through the waters:" and "will "refine you in the furnace, as silver is refined," Is. xliii. 2. Zech. xiii. 9.

And it affords matter of consolation, that all that relates to Zion is managed by the Lord himself: and if he see meet that there should be a day of treading down, and of perplexity from the Lord God of hosts, in the valley of vision,—who may say unto him, "What dost thou?". He giveth to us no account of his matters. But as to Zion, her "King is in her," however low she be brought; and "he will help her," and "that right early." He will bring glory to his own name, and good to his church, out of these dispensations; and however low his interest be, yet it shall rise again. He has "built his church upon a "rock; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against "it."——It is matter of consolation, that though

the Lord God of hosts is awfully threatening to "make a consumption, even determined in the midst "of the land; yet the consumption decreed shall "overflow with righteousness:" and he says, concerning the rod of his anger, the weapons of his indignation,—"Yet a little while and the indignation "shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction." Whatever dreadful work he may have for the Antichristian powers of spiritual Babylon, as "the rod of "his anger against an hypocritical nation;" yet we are fully assured, that "her plagues shall come in one day, "death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be "utterly burnt with fire: for strong is the Lord God "who judgeth her.——So shall the Lord of hosts "come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the "hill thereof," Is. x. 5. 6. 22. 23. Rev. xviii. 8. Is. xxxi. 4. The Lord has glorious appearances yet to make in these latter days, for bringing about the final overthrow of the Popish interest; as also, for reviving and advancing the reformation-interest: and his people may be comforted in the faith of it, that "the "zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this," Is. ix. 7.

3. FAITH is of excellent use in trying times; it is a good preparative for suffering, and a noble support under the same. This is the Christian's life at all times, and particularly in a day of tribulation,—to "live by the faith of the Son of God." Gal. ii. 20. It looks to Christ, and is lightened, Psal. xxxiv. 5. It rests upon God, when outward helps fail, Is. xxvi. 3. And thus the soul is established, Psal. cxxv. 1.—When driven off by discouragement and temptation, it puts forth a resolute act of adherence: Job xiii. 15. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." If troubles continue, and prayers are offered up,—but

God is silent, and no relief comes; then faith *waiteth*, Is. xlix. 23.; and a waiting faith fills the soul with a pleasant calm or serenity, delivering from sinking fears, Rom. v. 1. 2. Unbelief and fear go together. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" It commits the business to Christ; it leaves the matter with him; and is thus delivered from anxiety or perturbation, Psal. xxxvii. 5.

Faith relies on Christ's word of promise, Psal. cxix. 49. It sees him who is invisible, Heb. xi. 27. Thus Moses "endured, as seeing him who is invisible; "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people "of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a "season: esteeming the reproach of Christ greater "riches than the treasures in Egypt." Faith realiseth the divine presence with his people, in all sufferings and calamities; trusting to his word of grace,—"When thou passest through the waters, I will be "with thee.——Fear thou not, for I am with thee: "be not dismaid, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold "thee with the right hand of my righteousness," Is. xliii. 2. and xli. 10.

And faith doth support them, from the consideration that their sufferings are for Christ's sake: for "unto you it is given not only to believe on him, "but also to suffer for his sake," Phil. i. 29. They are supported, by comparing their sufferings for Christ with his sufferings for them; and by considering that they had suffered the wrath of God to eternity, had not Christ interposed for them. And faith encourages the soul, by foreseeing the end, the final removal of all their calamities and sufferings: "For "their light affliction is but for a moment; and it

"worketh for them a far more exceeding and eternal "weight of glory; while they look not at the things "which are seen, which are temporal, but at the "things which are not seen, which are eternal," 2 Cor. iv. 17. 18.

4. An heart dead to the world, to all the pleasures and enjoyments of it, is a good preparative for a public calamity and times of suffering: Gal. vi. 14. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of "our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is cru-"cified unto me, and I unto the world." We are to "run the race set before us," in the most difficult steps of it, "looking unto Jesus, the author and fi-"nisher of our faith;" and to "consider him that "endured such contradiction of sinners against him-"self, lest we be wearied, and faint in our minds." This will make us to "take joyfully the spoiling of "our goods, knowing that we have in heaven a bet-"ter and an enduring substance;" to rejoice that we are "counted worthy to suffer shame for his name;" being mortified to our ease and repose, to our name and character in the world, to our freedom and liberty, and even to life itself, "not loving our lives "unto the death." But unmortified corruptions will rage in a day of trial, and, like a torrent, sweep away all our resolutions; so that we will not suffer as Christians, to the honour and glory of Christ Jesus our Lord.

5. Christian courage and resolution is of excellent use in suffering and trying times. The apostle Paul was eminent in this grace: for, saith he, Acts xx. 24. "None of these things move me; neither "count I my life dear unto myself; so that I might "finish my course with joy; and the ministry, which

"I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the go-
"spel of the grace of God." This is not a natural, but an holy and given boldness for the cause of Christ, to be "valiant for the truth," Jer. ix. 3. By this grace, the Christian is animated to perform difficult duties, to maintain and appear for the cause of Christ, when it is opposed, and sinful compliances are required, Dan. iii. 16. and vi. 10. Thus Moses kept up an high value for Christ, and was not deterred from his duty by the fear of men; "not fearing the "wrath of the king," Heb. xi. 27.

This fortitude of mind is an holy boldness in performing difficult duties, flowing from faith in the call of God, and from a dependence upon Christ, and his promised grace, for enabling to the performance of them. It gives peace in the mind, whereas fainting will sadly disquiet: Psal. xcii. 7. "He shall not "be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting "in the Lord." It strengthens others: whereas fainting discourages them; like the fainting of a standard-bearer in an army, and like the spies who brought up an ill report on the land of promise.

6. A Praying frame is suitable for times of trouble and suffering.——"Is any among you af-
"flicted? let him pray," James v. 13. We should be "praying always, with all prayer and supplica-
"tion in the Spirit," Eph. vi. 18. And because "we have a great High Priest that is passed into the "heavens, Jesus the Son of God," we are to "hold "fast our profession" in shaking times, and in his name to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, "that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help "in time of need," Heb. iv. 14. Jacob, in the time of his trouble, "wept, and made supplication; yea,

" he had power with God, and prevailed," Hoſ. xii. 3. 4.——And, in our ſupplication, we are to depend upon the aſſiſting influence of the Holy Spirit, who " helpeth our infirmities,—with groanings which " cannot be uttered;" as alſo upon the merit, mediation, and powerful interceſſion of the Son of God, appearing in our nature within the vail, whom the Father heareth always.

II. Let all ranks of perſons in theſe lands be exhorted to aſſemble to the ſtandard of Zion's King: " for the kingdom is the Lord's; and he is the Go- " vernor among the nations."

" Be wiſe now therefore, O ye kings; be inſtruc- " ed, ye judges of the earth.—Kiſs the Son," in the way of homage and adoration, by believing in him, as the great God and our Saviour, by obeying his voice, and by ſubordinating all things to his honour and glory, " leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the " way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: bleſſ- " ed are all they that put their truſt in him," Pſal. ii. 10. 12.

It is promiſed, that " the kings ſhall ſhut their " mouths at him." They ſhall be well-pleaſed with the methods which he takes of ſetting up his ſpiritual kingdom in the world; and ſhall repent of their " ſetting of their threſhold by his threſholds," in the Eraſtian incroachments which they had made upon his crown, dignity, and authority,—and of their encouraging men under their power, in adding their own inventions to God's inſtitutions; being now brought to ſee that, when God's ordinances are corrupted, his name is diſhonoured. Yea, " kings ſhall " ſee and ariſe; princes alſo ſhall worſhip, becauſe of

" the Lord that is faithful :——for that which had " not been told them, ſhall they ſee ;" the myſtery of divine grace ſhall be made known unto them, and to the nations under their authority and government : their underſtandings ſhall be opened, that they may " behold wondrous things out of God's law ;" which ſhall awaken the attention, and engage the reverence of kings and kingdoms : " and that which they had " not heard, ſhall they conſider ;" they ſhall read the holy ſcriptures with new and enlightened eyes ; they ſhall now conſider and admire at the glory of God, as it ſhines in the face of Jeſus Chriſt ; and ſhall be perſuaded that it far exceeds all that they have heard, that the one half has not been told them : Iſ. lii. 15. and xlix. 7. Ezek. xliii. 7. ——And this ſhall excite them, under the influence of divine grace, to ſet about perſonal and national reformation ; in purging out the corruptions of church and ſtate ; and in taking care, that " whatſoever is commanded by " the God of heaven, be diligently done for the " houſe of the God of heaven." Thus ſhall they " ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trem- " bling," Ezra vii. 23. Pſal. ii. 11.

The word of exhortation ſpeaketh to the great men, the princes, thoſe who are born peers of the kingdom ; for it belongs unto them, as to ſet about perſonal reformation, ſo to be aſſiſting to the chief magiſtrate, in putting hand to, and proceeding in national reformation, Jer. v. 5. Ezra x. 4. 5. And the exhortation is directed to the whole body of the nation, as alſo to their repreſentatives, that, according to their ſeveral ſtations and characters, they may endeavour themſelves, and excite one another to " re- " turn unto the Lord," from whom we have all deeply revolted, Hoſ. vi. 1.

NOTHING less than national reformation will prevent the threatened national calamity. We have been ripening for the sickle of God's judgments, for more than these hundred years past, proceeding from evil to worse; in so much that, since the reformation, these lands were never so universally overspread with heresies, blasphemies, delusions, corruption of morals, vices and abominations of all sorts, in which we have surpassed the very deeds of the Heathen. And shall not he, who chastiseth the Heathen, correct us? If the grounds of God's controversy with us be not discerned, and the quarrel taken up, through the death and mediation of the Son of God, and we brought back to our allegiance to Christ, these lands shall be a field of blood, and being laid desolate, shall mourn: for our army and navy, which men sinfully put their confidence in, shall not be a protection in the "day of wrath," when the Lord himself doth muster the host of the battle.

IT is absolutely necessary, that, upon Christ's call in his word, ye believe on the Son of God, and assemble to the standard of Zion's King; for he is the glorious Shiloh, to whom "the gathering of the "people shall be," Gen. xlix. 10. This being a dark and cloudy day, because a sinning and backsliding day; a day of God's departure from the land, and of his controversy with it; a day of his scattering and dividing us, of his making the earth to tremble, of his making us to drink the wine of astonishment, of his threatening us with terrible things in righteousness, and to punish us seven times more for our iniquities: it is therefore a season wherein we are particularly and loudly called upon, without delay, to assemble under his banner: Zeph. ii. 1. 2. "Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together,

"O nation not desired: before the decree bring "forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the "fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before "the day of the Lord's anger come upon you."

And this standard, to which we are called to gather ourselves, is a "banner of truth," Psal. lx. 4. To it we should assemble ourselves, by believing in him, who is "the way, and the truth, and the life;" by depending on him, and living by faith upon him, who is "full of grace and truth;"—thus "receiving "of his fulness, and grace for grace:" as also by cleaving to his cause and interest; and, in our different capacities, contending for the truth, "for "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

The standard of Zion's King, as hath been observed, is a "banner of truth;" and the whole of divine revelation, all the declarations of God's mind and will, are inscribed or written on this his banner of truth. Every truth, however small it may appear in the view of some, is well worth the contending for; it being, as well as all others, inscribed on the banner of Zion's King, and a ray from him who is the Fountain of all truth, "the blessed and only Potentate, who only hath "immortality, dwelling in the light which no man "can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor "can see."

And the banner of Zion's King is a "banner of "love," Song ii. 4. It was free love that made the great God our Saviour take the field, so as to give the shout of war against his own and our enemies; saying, "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and "the year of my redeemed is come." And it will be heaven itself, to read the motto which is inscribed

upon this his banner; that is, to "comprehend with "all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and "depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, "which passeth knowledge."

His banner is likewise a banner of power; and there is protection under it for all the followers of our highest Lord Emmanuel. He himself doth support it and bear it up, who bears up the pillars of heaven and earth; who is "the mighty God, the "everlasting Father, and the standard-bearer among "ten thousand,"——There is rest and repose under this banner, in the midst of all the shakings and tossings here below: Is. xi. 10. "And in that day there "shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an "ensign of the people: to it shall the Gentiles seek, "and his rest shall be glorious." And, saith the apostle, "We, which have believed, do enter into rest." Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ shall be, to all those who assemble under his banner, "a place of "broad rivers and streams; as an hiding-place from "the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers "of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great "rock in a weary land."

III. To conclude,—let us be exhorted unto an habitual and constant dependence, by faith, upon our Lord Jesus Christ; which is absolutely necessary, in order to our "glorifying God in the fires" of trials and tribulations: for "without him we can do no-"thing; and, through Christ strengthening us," we shall be enabled to do all things; enabled to confess him before men, to take joyfully the spoiling of our goods, and even to resist unto blood, striving against sin.

We muſt depend on him for every thing, as the branches depend on the root, and the building upon the foundation, John xv. 5. "Not that we are ſufficient of ourſelves to think any thing as of ourſelves; but our ſufficiency is of God," 2 Cor. iii. 5.——God has laid up all our ſtock in Chriſt's hand; and will have him glorified by his people and followers, in their depending upon him, "receiving of his fulneſs, and grace for grace." It is their diſpoſition to glory in their infirmities, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon them. Their natural averſion from the way of dependence upon him for all things, is conquered by grace; and they glory only in the Lord, becauſe "the glory of their ſtrength is in him; and in his righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted."

Now, ſeeing "the Lord cometh out of his place to puniſh the inhabitants of theſe lands for their iniquity," If. xxvi. 21.; let men of all characters bow before him, in the humble adorations of faith, of goſpel-repentance, and reformation. For thus ſaith the Lord, Jer. xiii. 15. 16. "Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath ſpoken. Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cauſe darkneſs, and before your feet ſtumble upon the dark mountains; and while ye look for light, he turn it into the ſhadow of death, and make it groſs darkneſs."

APPENDIX.

[*N. B.* The *national covenant* of Scotland is here prefixed to the *Solemn League and Covenant* of the three kingdoms; as the latter in some manner reduplicates upon the former,—by an engagement to "endeavour the preservation of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, "discipline, and government, against our common enemies."]

The NATIONAL COVENANT;

OR,

The CONFESSION of FAITH,

Subscribed at first by the king's majesty and his household, in the year 1580; *thereafter, by persons of all ranks, in the year* 1581, *by ordinance of the Lords of secret council, and acts of the general assembly. Subscribed again, by all sorts of persons, in the year* 1590, *by a new ordinance of council, at the desire of the general assembly, with a general bond for the maintaining of the true Christian religion, and the king's person; and together with a resolution and promise to maintain the true religion, and the king's majesty, according to the foresaid confession, and acts of parliament, subscribed by barons, nobles, gentlemen, burgesses, ministers, and commons, in the year* 1638. *Approven by the general assembly* 1638 *and* 1639; *and subscribed again, by persons of all ranks and qualities, in the year* 1639, *by an ordinance of council, upon the supplication of the general assembly, and act of the general assembly. Ratified by an act of parliament* 1640; *and subscribed by King Charles* II. *at Spey, June* 23. 1650, *and at Scoon, January* 1. 1651.

WE all and every one of us underwritten, protest, That, after long and due examination of our own consciences, in matters of true and false

religion, we are now thoroughly resolved in the truth by the word and Spirit of God: and therefore we believe with our hearts, confess with our mouths, subscribe with our hands, and constantly affirm before God and the whole world, That this only is the true Christian faith and religion, pleasing God, and bringing salvation to man, which now is, by the mercy of God, revealed to the world by the preaching of the blessed evangel; and is received, believed, and defended by many and sundry notable kirks and realms, but chiefly by the kirk of Scotland, the kings majesty, and three estates of this realm, as God's eternal truth, and only ground of our salvation; as more particularly is expressed in the Confession of our faith, established, and publicly confirmed by sundry acts of parliaments, and now of a long time hath been openly professed by the king's majesty, and whole body of this realm, both in burgh and land. To the which confession and form of religion, we willingly agree in our conscience in all points, as unto God's undoubted truth and verity, grounded only upon his written word. And therefore we abhor and detest all contrary religion and doctrine; but chiefly all kind of Papistry, in general and particular heads, even as they are now damned and confuted by the word of God, and kirk of Scotland: but, in special, we detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Roman Antichrist upon the scriptures of God, upon the kirk, the civil magistrate, and consciences of men: all his tyrannous laws made upon indifferent things, against our Christian liberty; his erroneous doctrine against the sufficiency of the written word, the perfection of the law, the office of Christ, and his blessed evangel: his corrupted doctrine concerning original sin, our natural inability and rebellion to God's law, our justification by faith on-

ly, our imperfect sanctification and obedience to the law; the nature, number, and use of the holy sacraments: his five bastard sacraments, with all his rites, ceremonies, and false doctrine, added to the ministration of the true sacraments, without the word of God: his cruel judgment against infants departing without the sacrament: his absolute necessity of baptism: his blasphemous opinion of transubstantiation, or real presence of Christ's body in the elements, and receiving of the same by the wicked, or bodies of men: his dispensations with solemn oaths, perjuries, and degrees of marriage forbidden in the word: his cruelty against the innocent divorced: his devilish mass: his blasphemous priesthood: his profane sacrifice, for the sins of the dead and the quick: his canonization of men; calling upon angels, or saints departed; worshipping of imagery, relics, and crosses; dedicating of kirks, altars, days; vows to creatures: his purgatory, prayers for the dead; praying or speaking in a strange language; with his processions and blasphemous litany, and multitude of advocates or mediators: his manifold orders, auricular confession: his desperate and uncertain repentance: his general and doubtsome faith: his satisfactions of men for their sins: his justification by works, *opus operatum*, works of supererogation, merits, pardons, peregrinations, and stations: his holy water, baptizing of bells, conjuring of spirits, crossing, saying, anointing, conjuring, hallowing of God's good creatures, with the superstitious opinion joined therewith: his worldly monarchy, and wicked hierarchy: his three solemn vows, with all his shavellings of sundry sorts: his erroneous and bloody decrees made at Trent, with all the subscribers or approvers of that cruel and bloody band, conjured against the kirk of God. And, finally, we detest all his vain allegories,

rites, signs, and traditions, brought in the kirk without or against the word of God, and doctrine of this true reformed kirk: to the which we join ourselves willingly, in doctrine, faith, religion, discipline, and use of the holy sacraments, as lively members of the same, in Christ our Head: promising and swearing by the great name of the LORD OUR GOD, That we shall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and discipline of this kirk, and shall defend the same, according to our vocation and power, all the days of our lives; under the pains contained in the law, and danger both of body and soul in the day of God's fearful judgment.

And seeing that many are stirred up by Satan, and that Roman Antichrist, to promise, swear, subscribe, and for a time use the holy sacraments in the kirk deceitfully, against their own conscience; minding hereby, first, under the external cloak of religion, to corrupt, and subvert secretly, God's true religion within the kirk; and afterward, when time may serve, to become open enemies and persecutors of the same, under vain hope of the Pope's dispensation, devised against the word of God, to his greater confusion, and their double condemnation in the day of the Lord Jesus: we therefore, willing to take away all suspicion of hypocrisy, and of such double-dealing with God and his kirk, protest, and call the searcher of all hearts for witness, That our minds and hearts do fully agree with this our confession, promise, oath, and subscription; so that we are not moved with any worldly respect, but are persuaded only in our conscience, through the knowledge and love of God's true religion, imprinted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, as we shall answer to him in the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed.

And becauſe we perceive, that the quietneſs and ſtability of our religion and kirk, doth depend upon the ſafety and good behaviour of the King's Majeſty, as upon a comfortable inſtrument of God's mercy granted to this country, for the maintaining of his kirk, and miniſtration of juſtice amongſt us; we proteſt and promiſe with our hearts, under the ſame oath, hand-writ, and pains, That we ſhall defend his perſon and authority with our goods, bodies, and lives, in the defence of Chriſt his evangel, liberties of our country, miniſtration of juſtice, and puniſhment of iniquity, againſt all enemies within this realm or without, as we deſire our God to be a ſtrong and merciful Defender to us in the day of our death, and coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory eternally. *Amen* *.

* The foregoing *National Covenant* was renewed in the year 1638, in a *bond* ſuited to the circumſtances of that time: and the general aſſembly, in that year, having declared, that the *five articles of Perth*, (*viz.* the obſervation of *holidays*, *kneeling* at the communion, *confirmation* by biſhops, *private baptiſm*, and *private communion*), as alſo *the government of the kirk by biſhops*, and *the civil places and power of kirkmen*, were all contrary to the *National Covenant*, as it had been meant and profeſſed in the year 1580, and afterwards; it was again ſubſcribed in the year 1639, with an expreſs *renunciation* of thoſe articles, as having been materially abjured by it formerly.

The SOLEMN LEAGUE and COVENANT,

For reformation and defence of religion, the honour and happineſs of the king, and the peace and ſafety of the three kingdoms of Sotland, England, and Ireland,

Agreed upon by commiſſioners from the parliament, and aſſembly of divines in England, with commiſſioners of the convention of eſtates, and general aſſembly in Scotland: approven by the general aſſembly of the church of Scotland, and by both houſes of parliament, and aſſembly of divines in England; and taken and ſubſcribed by them, anno 1643: *and thereafter, by the ſaid authority, taken and ſubſcribed by all ranks in Scotland and England, the ſame year; and ratified by act of the parliament of Scotland,* anno 1644: *and again renewed in Scotland, with an acknowledgment of ſins, and engagement to duties, by all ranks,* anno 1648; *and by the parliament* 1649: *and taken and ſubſcribed by King Charles* II. *at Spey, June* 23. 1650, *and at Scoon, January* 1. 1651.

WE noblemen, barons, knights, gentlemen, citizens, burgeſſes, miniſters of the goſpel, and commons of all ſorts, in the kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland, by the providence of God living under one king, and being of one reformed religion, having before our eyes the glory of God, and the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, the honour and happineſs

of the king's majesty and his posterity, and the true public liberty, safety, and peace of the kingdoms, wherein every one's private condition is included: and calling to mind the treacherous and bloody plots, conspiracies, attempts, and practices of the enemies of God, against the true religion, and professors thereof, in all places, especially in these three kingdoms, ever since the reformation of religion; and how much their rage, power, and presumption, are of late, and at this time, increased and exercised, whereof the deplorable state of the church and kingdom of Ireland, the distressed estate of the church and kingdom of England, and the dangerous estate of the church and kingdom of Scotland, are present and public testimonies. We have now, at last, (after other means of supplication, remonstrance, protestations, and sufferings), for the preservation of ourselves and our religion from utter ruin and destruction, according to the commendable practice of these kingdoms in former times, and the example of God's people in other nations, after mature deliberation, resolved and determined to enter into a mutual and solemn league and covenant, wherein we all subscribe, and each one of us for himself, with our hands lifted up to the Most High God, do swear,

I. That we shall sincerely, really, and constantly, through the grace of God, endeavour, in our several places and callings, the preservation of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, against our common enemies; the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the word of God, and the example of the best reformed churches; and shall endeavour to bring the churches of God in

the three kingdoms, to the neareſt conjunction and uniformity in religion, Confeſſion of Faith, Form of Church-government, Directory for Worſhip and Catechiſing; that we, and our poſterity after us, may, as brethren, live in faith and love; and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midſt of us.

II. That we ſhall, in like manner, without reſpect of perſons, endeavour the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, (that is, church-government by archbiſhops, biſhops, their chancellors and commiſſaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other eccleſiaſtical officers depending on that hierarchy), ſuperſtition, hereſy, ſchiſm, profaneneſs, and whatſoever ſhall be found to be contrary to ſound doctrine, and the power of godlineſs, leſt we partake in other mens ſins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues; and that the Lord may be one, and his name one, in the three kingdoms.

III. We ſhall, with the ſame ſincerity, reality, and conſtancy, in our ſeveral vocations, endeavour, with our eſtates and lives, mutually to preſerve the rights and privileges of the parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdoms; and to preſerve and defend the king's majeſty's perſon and authority, in the preſervation and defence of the true religion, and liberties of the kingdoms; that the world may bear witneſs with our conſciences of our loyalty, and that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminiſh his majeſty's juſt power and greatneſs.

IV. We ſhall alſo, with all faithfulneſs, endeavour the diſcovery of all ſuch as have been, or ſhall be incendiaries, malignants or evil inſtruments, by hindering the reformation of religion, dividing the king

from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another, or making any faction, or parties amongst the people, contrary to this league and covenant; that they may be brought to public trial, and receive condign punishment, as the degree of their offences shall require or deserve; or the supreme judicatures of both kingdoms respectively, or others having power from them for that effect, shall judge convenient.

V. And whereas the happiness of a blessed peace between these kingdoms, denied in former times to our progenitors, is, by the good providence of God, granted unto us, and hath been lately concluded, and settled by both parliaments: we shall each one of us, according to our place and interest, endeavour that they may remain conjoined in a firm peace and union to all posterity; and that justice may be done upon the wilful opposers thereof, in manner expressed in the precedent article.

VI. We shall also, according to our places and callings, in this common cause of religion, liberty, and peace of the kingdoms, assist and defend all those that enter into this league and covenant, in the maintaining and pursuing thereof; and shall not suffer ourselves, directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, persuasion, or terror, to be divided and withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give ourselves to a detestable indifferency or neutrality in this cause, which so much concerneth the glory of God, the good of the kingdoms, and honour of the king; but shall, all the days of our lives, zealously and constantly continue therein, against all opposition, and promote the same, according to our power, against all lets and impediments whatsoever;

and what we are not able ourselves to suppress or overcome, we shall reveal and make known, that it may be timely prevented or removed. All which we shall do as in the sight of God.

And because these kingdoms are guilty of many sins and provocations against God, and his Son Jesus Christ, as is too manifest by our present distresses and dangers, the fruits thereof: we profess and declare, before God and the world, our unfeigned desire to be humbled for our own sins, and for the sins of these kingdoms; especially that we have not, as we ought, valued the inestimable benefit of the gospel, that we have not laboured for the purity and power thereof, and that we have not endeavoured to receive Christ in our hearts, nor to walk worthy of him in our lives; which are the causes of other sins and transgressions, so much abounding amongst us; and our true and unfeigned purpose, desire, and endeavour, for ourselves, and all others under our power and charge, both in public and in private, in all duties we owe to God and man, to amend our lives, and each one to go before another in the example of a real reformation; that the Lord may turn away his wrath and heavy indignation, and establish these churches and kingdoms in truth and peace. And this covenant we make in the presence of Almighty God, the searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to perform the same, as we shall answer at that great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed: most humbly beseeching the Lord to strengthen us by his holy Spirit for this end, and to bless our desires and proceedings with such success, as may be deliverance and safety to his people, and encouragement to other Christian churches, groaning under, or in danger of the yoke of Antichristian tyranny, to

join in the same, or like association and covenant; to the glory of God, the enlargement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the peace and tranquillity of Christian kingdoms and commonwealths.

An EXHORTATION to the taking of the *Solemn League and Covenant*, for reformation and defence of religion, the honour and happiness of the king, and the peace and safety of the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland;

By the assembly of divines at Westminster: prepared according to an ordinance of both houses of Parliament, dated Feb. 2. 1643-4.

IF the power of religion, or solid reason; if loyalty to the king, and piety to their native country, or love to themselves, and natural affection to their posterity; if the example of men, touched with a deep sense of all these, or extraordinary success from God thereupon, can awaken an embroiled, bleeding remnant, to embrace the sovereign and only means of their recovery, there can be no doubt, but this Solemn League and Covenant will find, wheresoever it shall be tendered, a people ready to entertain it with all chearfulness and duty.

AND were it not commended to the kingdom by the concurring encouragement of the honourable houses of parliament, the assembly of divines, the renowned city of London, multitudes of other persons of eminent rank and quality in this nation, and the whole

body of Scotland, who have all willingly ſworn and ſubſcribed it, with rejoicing at the oath, ſo graciouſly ſeconded from heaven already, by blaſting the counſels, and breaking the power of the enemy more than ever; yet it goeth forth in its own ſtrength, with ſuch convincing evidence of equity, truth, and righteouſneſs, as may raiſe in all, not wilfully ignorant, or miſerably ſeduced, inflamed affections to join with their brethren in this happy bond, for putting an end to the preſent miſeries, and for ſaving of both king and kingdom from utter ruin, now ſo ſtrongly and openly laboured by the Popiſh faction, and ſuch as have been bewitched and beſotted by that viperous and bloody generation.

For what is there almoſt in this covenant, which was not, for ſubſtance, either expreſſed, or manifeſtly included, in that ſolemn proteſtation of May 5. 1641 *,

* This proteſtation, which was taken by the members of the houſe of Commons, May 3. 1641, printed by their order, May 5. and taken afterward by all ſorts of perſons in England, is as follows: "I *A. B.* do, in the preſence of Almighty God, promiſe, vow, and proteſt, to maintain and defend, as far as lawfully I may, with my life, power, and eſtate, the true reformed Proteſtant religion, expreſſed in the doctrine of the church of England, againſt all Popery, and Popiſh innovations within this realm, contrary to the ſame doctrine; and, according to the duty of my allegiance, his Majeſty's royal perſon, honour, and eſtate; as alſo the power and privileges of parliament, the lawful rights and liberties of the ſubject, and every perſon that maketh this proteſtation, in whatſoever he ſhall do in the lawful purſuance of the ſame: and to my power, and as far as lawfully I may, I will oppoſe, and, by all good ways and means, endeavour to bring to condign puniſhment, all ſuch as ſhall, either by force, practice, counſels, plots, conſpiracies, or otherwiſe, do any thing to the contrary of any thing in this proteſtation contained: and further, that I ſhall, in all juſt and honourable ways, endeavour to preſerve the union and peace of England,

wherein the whole kingdom ſtands engaged until this day? the ſinful neglect whereof doth, as we may juſtly fear, open one flood-gate the more to let in all theſe calamities upon the kingdom, and caſt upon it a neceſſity of renewing covenant, and of entering into this.

If it be ſaid the extirpation of Prelacy, to wit, the whole hierarchical government (ſtanding, as yet, by the known laws of the kingdom) is new and unwarrantable; this will appear to all impartial underſtandings, though new, to be not only warrantable, but neceſſary; if they conſider (to omit what ſome ſay, that this government was never formally eſtabliſhed by any laws of this kingdom at all) that the very life and ſoul thereof is already taken away by an act paſſed in this preſent parliament *, ſo as, like Jezebel's carcaſe, of which no more was left but the ſkull, the feet, and the palms of her hands, nothing of juriſdiction remains, but what is precarious in them, and voluntary in thoſe who ſubmit unto them: that their whole government is at beſt but a human conſtitution, and ſuch as is found and adjudged by both houſes of parliament, in which the

Scotland, and Ireland; and neither for hope, fear, nor other reſpect, ſhall relinquiſh this promiſe, vow, and proteſtation." By the words, *the true reformed Proteſtant religion, expreſſed in the doctrine of the church of England*, &c. in this proteſtation, the Commons declare, was and is meant, only the public doctrine profeſſed in the ſaid church, ſo far as it is oppoſite to Popery and Popiſh innovations; and that the ſaid words are not to be extended to the maintaining of any form of worſhip, diſcipline, or government, nor of any rites or ceremonies of the ſaid church of England.

* Dated May 2. 1641, declaring, "That *perſons in holy orders ſhall not exerciſe any temporal juriſdiction.*

judgment of the whole kingdom is involved and declared, not only very prejudicial to the civil ſtate, but a great hindrance alſo to the perfect reformation of religion. Yea, who knoweth it not to be too much an enemy thereto, and deſtructive of the power of godlineſs and pure adminiſtration of the ordinances of Chriſt? Which moved the well-affected, almoſt throughout this kingdom, long ſince to petition this parliament, as has been deſired before, even in the reign of Queen Eliſabeth, and of King James, for a total abolition of the ſame. Nor is any man hereby bound to offer any violence to their perſons, but only, in his place and calling, to endeavour their extirpation in a lawful way.

And as for thoſe clergymen, who pretend, that they, above all others, cannot covenant to extirpate that government, becauſe they have, as they ſay, taken a ſolemn oath to obey the biſhops *in licitis et honeſtis*; they can tell, if they pleaſe, that they that have ſworn obedience to the laws of the land, are not thereby prohibited from endeavouring, by all lawful means, the abolition of thoſe laws, when they prove inconvenient or miſchievous. And if yet there ſhould any oath be found, into which any miniſters or others have entered, not warranted by the laws of God and the land; in this caſe they muſt teach themſelves and others, that ſuch oaths call for repentance, not pertinacy in them.

If it be pleaded, That this oath croſſeth the oaths of ſupremacy or allegiance, there can be nothing farther from the truth; for this covenant binds all, and more ſtrongly engageth them, to "preſerve and "defend the king's majeſty's perſon and authority,

" in the preſervation and defence of the true religion " and liberties of the kingdoms."

THAT ſcruple, That this is done without the king's conſent, will ſoon be removed, if it be remembered, that the proteſtation of the 5th of May, before mentioned, was, in the ſame manner, voted and executed by both houſes, and after, by order of one houſe alone, ſent abroad to all the kingdom; his majeſty not excepting againſt it, or giving any ſtop to the taking of it, albeit he was then reſident in perſon at Whitehall.

THUS Ezra and Nehemiah, Ezra x. Neh. ix. drew all the people into a covenant, without any ſpecial commiſſion from the Perſian monarchs, then their ſovereigns, ſo to do; albeit they were not free ſubjects, but vaſſals, and one of them, Neh. i. the menial ſervant of Artaxerxes, then, by conqueſt, king of Judah alſo.

NOR hath this doctrine or practice been deemed ſeditious or unwarrantable, by the princes that have ſat upon the Engliſh throne, but juſtified and defended by Queen Elizabeth, of bleſſed memory, with the expence of much treaſure and noble blood, in the United Provinces of the Netherlands, combined not only without, but againſt the unjuſt violence of Philip King of Spain. King James followed her ſteps, ſo far as to approve their union, and to enter into league with them as free ſtates; which is continued, by his majeſty now reigning, unto this day; who, both by his expedition for the relief of Rochelle in France, and his ſtrict confederacy with the Prince of Orange and the States-general, notwithſtanding all the importunity of Spain to the con-

trary, hath set to his seal, that all that had been done by his royal ancestors, in maintenance of those who had so engaged and combined themselves, was just and warrantable.

And what had become of the religion, laws, and liberties of our sister-nation of Scotland, had they not entered into such a solemn league and covenant at the beginning of the late troubles there? Which course, however it was at first, by the Popish and Prelatic projectors, represented to his majesty as an offence of the highest nature, justly deserving chastisement by the fury of a puissant army; yet, when the matter came afterwards, in cool blood, to be debated, first, by commissioners of both kingdoms, and then, in open parliament here, when all those of either house, who are now engaged at Oxford, were present in parliament, and gave their votes therein, it was found, adjudged, and declared by the king in parliament, That our dear brethren in Scotland had done nothing but what became loyal and obedient subjects; and were thereupon, by act of parliament, publicly righted in all the churches of this kingdom, where they had been defamed.

Therefore, however some men, hoodwinked and blinded by the artifices of those Jesuitical engineers, who have long conspired to sacrifice our religion to the idolatry of Rome, our laws, liberties, and persons, to arbitrary slavery, and our estates to their insatiable avarice, may possibly be deterred and amused with high threats and declarations, flying up and down on the wings of the royal name and countenance, now captivated and prostituted to serve all their lusts, to proclaim all rebels and traitors who

take this covenant; yet let no faithful English heart be afraid to join with our brethren of all the three kingdoms in this solemn league, as sometimes the men of Israel, though under another king, did with the men of Judah, at the invitation of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxx.

What though those tongues, set on fire by hell, do rail and threaten? That God, who was pleased to clear up the innocence of Mordecai and the Jews, against all the malicious aspersions of wicked Haman to his and their sovereign, so as all his plotting produced but this effect, that Esth. ix. when the king's commandment and decree drew near to be put in execution, and the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, it was turned to the contrary, and the Jews had rule over them that hated them, and laid hands on such as sought their hurt, so as no man could withstand them; and that same God, who but even as yesterday, vouchsafed to disperse and scatter those dark clouds and fogs which overshadowed that loyal and religious kingdom of Scotland, and to make their righteousness to shine as clear as the sun at noon-day, in the very eyes of their greatest enemies, will undoubtedly stand by all those, who, with singleness of heart, and a due sense of their own sins, and a necessity of reformation, shall now enter into an everlasting covenant with the Lord, never to be forgotten, to put an end to all those unhappy and unnatural breaches between the king and such as are faithful in the land, causing their righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations, to the terror and confusion of those men of blood, the confederate enemies of God and the king, who have long combined, and have now raked together the

dregs and scum of many kingdoms, to bury all the glory, honour, and liberty of this nation, in the eternal grave of dishonour and destruction.

Friday, February 9. 1643-4.

An exhortation touching the taking of the *Solemn League and Covenant*, and for satisfying of such scruples as may arise in the taking of it, was this day read the first and second time; and, by vote upon the question, assented to, and ordered to be forthwith printed.

H. Elsynge, *Cl. Par. D. Com.* *

A Letter from the General Assembly of the church of Scotland, to the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the city of London.

YOUR late and seasonable testimony given to the truth of the gospel, and your affection to the peace of the kingdoms, manifested in your hum-

* Here did follow the *Solemn League and Covenant*, printed by an ordinance of parliament, Feb. 1643-4; with the names of 228 members of the house of Commons, who had then taken it. This, with other vouchers, which the history of that time affords, makes it appear,—that it was the more general sense and mind of the kingdom of England, as well as of Scotland,—that it was their duty, in obedience to God, and in the faith of his promise, to devote themselves and these lands unto the Lord in a covenant of duty: and that these solemn vows were then entered into by persons of all ranks in these kingdoms, is notorious to all who know any thing of those times.

ble remonſtrance and petition to the honourable houſes of parliament, hath ſo revived the remembrance of your former faith and zeal, and proclaimed you the worthy ſeed of ſo noble anceſtors in that famous city, as we cannot but acknowledge, with all thankfulneſs, the grace of God beſtowed on you, and ſtir you up to take notice, how, ſince you were precious in the Lord's ſight, you have been ever honourable; the Lord hath loved you, given men for you, and people for your life. What an honour was it in the days of old, when the fire of the Lord was in Zion, and his furnace in your Jeruſalem, even in Queen Mary's days, that there were found in you men that loved not their lives unto the death? What a glory in after-time, when Satan had his throne, and Antichriſt his ſeat, in the midſt of you, that there were ſtill found not a few that kept their garments clean? But the greateſt praiſe of the good hand of God upon you hath been in this, that, amidſt the many miſts of error and hereſy which have riſen from the bottomleſs pit, to beſpot the face, and darken the glory of the church, (while the bride is a-making ready for the Lamb), you have held the truth, and moſt piouſly endeavoured the ſettling of Chriſt upon his throne. We need not remember how zealous you have been in the cauſe of God, nor how you have laid out yourſelves and eſtates in the maintenance thereof, nor how many acknowledgments of the ſame you have had from the honourable houſes, nor how precious a remembrance will be had of you in after-ages, for your ſelling of all to buy the pearl of price: we only at this time do admire, and, in the inward of our hearts, do bleſs the Lord for your right and deep apprehenſions of the great and important matters of Chriſt in his royal

crown, and of the kingdoms in their union, while the Lord makes offer to bring our ſhip, ſo much afflicted and toſſed with tempeſt, to the ſafe harbour of truth and peace. Right memorable is your zeal againſt ſects and ſectaries; your care of reformation, according to the word of God, and the example of the beſt reformed churches; your earneſt endeavours and noble adventures, for preſerving of the rights and priviledges of parliament, and liberties of the kingdoms, together with his majeſty's juſt power and greatneſs; and your high profeſſion, that it is not in the power of any human authority to diſcharge or abſolve you from adhering unto that our (ſo ſolemnly ſworn) league and covenant, or to enforce upon you any ſenſe contrary to the letter of the ſame; beſides your other good ſervices done unto the Lord and to us, in the ſtrengthening of the hands of the reverend aſſembly of divines, and of our commiſſioners, in their aſſerting of the government of Chriſt, (which the more it be tried, will be ever found the more precious truth), and vindicating of the ſame from the uſurpation of man, and contempt of the wicked. Theſe all, as they are ſo many teſtimonies of your piety, loyalty, and undaunted reſolution to ſtand for Chriſt: ſo are they, and ſhall ever be ſo many obligations upon us your brethren, to eſteem highly of you in the Lord, to bear you on our breaſts before him night and day, and to contribute our beſt endeavours, and to improve all opportunities for your encouragement. And now we beſeech you in the Lord, honourable and well-beloved, go on in this your ſtrength, and in the power of his might, who hath honoured you to be faithful; ſtand faſt in that liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made you free: and in the purſuance of this truth, we are confident, as you have, ſo you will never ceaſe to

ſtudy the peace and nearer conjunction of the kingdoms; knowing that a threefold cord is not eaſily broken. Now, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and God, even our Father, which hath loved and honoured you, and given you everlaſting conſolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and ſtabliſh you in every good word and work.

Edinburgh, June 18. 1646. *Subſcribed in name of the General Aſſembly, by*

ROBERT BLAIR, *Modr.* *

* Some hint being given in the preceding diſcourſes,—concerning the reformation which is needed in the *worſhip*, *diſcipline*, and *government* of the church; it will be proper, in order to the reformation of *doctrine*,—that the reader ſeriouſly peruſe the *thirty-nine articles* of the church of England, Mr *Hervey's dialogues and letters*, Mr *Boſton's fourfold ſtate*, his *view of the covenant of grace*, and Meſſ. *Erſkines ſermons*.

The *Proper*, *True*, and *Supreme* DEITY of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, proved and asserted from the Holy Scriptures.

Hear, O Israel, JEHOVAH, our God, is one JEHOVAH, Deut. vi 4.

Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father, 1 John ii. 23.

If you despise the Son, that you may honour the Father, he does not receive your honour. When the Son is despised, the Father is no way glorified.

GREGOR. Naz. orat. 31. page 507.

INTRODUCTION.

IT will be of little use to the reader, or service to myself, to make any apology for publishing the following essay at this time. I shall therefore content myself with narrating, that it was the opinion of some of a superior knowledge and judgment to mine, that what is here delivered is seasonable and agreeable to the holy scriptures, and the doctrine laid down in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms. And reflecting, how that many either want time, or knowledge sufficient to read the excellent treatises of learned men on this sublime subject; and hoping this small preservative against the errors of the times might, by the blessing of God, prove, in that respect, more serviceable to them, than the more critical and accurate discourses of the learned; I was prevailed with to allow this performance, such as it is, to go abroad.

My design is not to impose a meaning and sense

of my own upon Mr Simpson's words, or in the least to reflect upon his character. As I have conceived no manner of prejudice against him, so I heartily wish him well. What I have in view is, according to my small measure of knowledge in so momentous and important an article, to prove and assert, from the holy scriptures, the great and fundamental doctrine of the proper and supreme Deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that has been attacked and subverted, by the propositions found relevant and proven against him, by the assemblies of this church. If my endeavours have the effect to excite others of greater abilities to manage this argument to better purpose, I shall think myself well rewarded.

The doctrine received in this church, is as follows: Confes. chap. ii. sect. 1. The unity of God is asserted in thir terms: "There is but one only "living and true God, who is infinite in being and "perfection."— § 2. God, essentially considered, is described, "God hath all life, glory, goodness, "blessedness, in and of himself; and is alone in, and "unto himself all-sufficient.——He is the alone "Fountain of all being; of whom, through whom, "and to whom are all things; and hath most sove-"reign dominion over them.—To him is due, from "angels and men,—worship, service."——And in § 3. it is immediately subjoined, "In the unity of "the Godhead, there be three persons of one sub-"stance, power, and eternity: God the Father, "God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The "Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceed-"ing: the Son is eternally begotten of the Father: "the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Fa-"ther and the Son." And chap. viii. § 2. "The "Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, be-

"ing very and eternal God, of one substance, and e-
"qual with the Father."—And Larger Catechism, answ. to quest. 9. the same doctrine is maintained: "There be three persons in the Godhead, the Fa-
"ther, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these
"three are one, true, eternal God, the same in sub-
"stance, equal in power and glory; although distin-
"guished by their personal properties."

Bishop Bull has sufficiently shewn, in his *Defensio fidei Nicenæ*, *Judicium ecclesiæ*, and *Primitiva traditio*, that the catholic church did all along professs a Trinity of persons consubstantial, co-eternal, in unity of nature, substance, and Godhead. And Bishop Stillingfleet has pursued the same argument. And a modern author †, who has distinguished himself, by his knowledge of the ancients, has asserted, that that definition of one self-existent, underived, independent, supreme being, hath long passed current with men, who believed a Trinity of divine persons: and that it is properly a definition of the τὸ θεῖον the divine nature, abstracting from the consideration of the distinction of persons.

Spanhem has taken notice of the artifice of Sandius, and of Arius before him, in loading those that maintained the numerical oneness of substance or essence, with the charge of Sabellianism. But it must be remembered, that the Sabellians owned no other Trinity, but of different appearances and manifestations of God to mankind: and this we sufficiently escape, when we own, that though "there is no o-
"ther God but one;" yet that one God is Father, Son, and Spirit, who each of them possess all divine perfections, and who are proper persons, though not

† Dr Waterland's 1st def. page 377.

in the ordinary meaning of the term person among men; and that they are truly distinguished from one another, as the unbegotten Father, the begotten Son, and the Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son: though no man can define the nature, measure, or manner of that distinction, because not revealed. This, however, we are assured of from the word of God, that they are so distinct as to be three persons, and so cannot be one person; that they are so distinct as the one cannot be the other; so distinct, that the Son only assumed human flesh, and suffered, and not the Father, nor the Holy Spirit: and yet they are so one, as to be of one substance or essence in number, so as to be one, true, eternal God; so one, as that the definition of the τὸ θεῖον of which above, agrees to each person; so that we may safely affirm of the Son, as well as of the Father, that he is the self-existent, underived, independent, supreme Being.

It well deserves to be observed with what judgment and caution, that great man, the learned and honourable author of the critical history of the † creed, has expressed himself as to the manner of the generation: "As for (says the author) the manner of "the Father's eternal begetting of the Son, there "are various similitudes used by the ancients to help "our conceptions therein. Only this I shall venture "to affirm, that none of them do yield us any ade- "quate or satisfactory apprehension of this sublime "and incomprehensible mystery. For which reason "great caution is to be used in our searches therein- "to, and expressions thereof, that we do not, with "too great nicety and curiousness, dive into this pro- "found and incomprehensible secret, least, whilst we "endeavour to shew our learning and knowledge,

† Hist. of the apost. creed. page 134.

"we betray our ignorance, and, what is worse, con-
"ceive and utter things unbecoming the divine and
"infinite Majesty." See also page 79.

From what we have seen advanced by this celebrated author, and from a view of the scope, design, and connection of that learned performance, it is very manifest, that Mr Simpson, in his defences, (state, page 102. and 103. compared), imposes a meaning upon the words of the author, very different from his own, when he cites these words, page 64. *viz.* "This ex-
"pression of one God, is to be understood either ab-
"solutely, without regard to any other article in the
"creed; and so it denotes our faith, that there is but
"one eternal, independent, self-existent God:" and alledges, that the author, in this place, takes the term self-existent for being of none, *i. e.* for the personal property of the Father, and says, "This descrip-
"tion is to be understood of God the Father; as is
"plain, from his (the author's) words in the prece-
"ding page, and what follows in this." But if this expression of one God, understood absolutely, and as denoting that there is but one eternal, independent, self-existent God, is to be understood of God the Father, as being of none; which Mr Simpson all along inculcates to be the personal property of the Father, and so not belonging to the Son; then, according to him, the author here gives it as his opinion, That the Father alone, in exclusion of the Son, is one eternal, independent, self-existent God. Now, that the words can bear no such meaning, is very manifest, as, from other considerations, so, from the author's expressly asserting, page 133. "That Christ is the true
"and natural Son of God, begotten by him before
"all worlds:" and from his citing Austin with approbation, (page 80.) saying, "That when in the

" creed the name of God the Father is conjoined, it " is thereby declared, That he was not first of all a " God, and afterwards a Father; but without any " beginning, he is always both God and Father." That learned author here asserts the Son's absolute eternity, and that the Father, without any beginning, was always Father, and, consequently, that there was no instant when he was without a Son. Since our God the Father always was a Father, it follows, by a necessary consequence, that he always had a Son, and that that Son of his had no beginning of being; and therefore it must be acknowledged that he is a beginningless Being, and that he is, together with the Father and Holy Spirit, (according to the description of the one God, given by our learned author), one eternal, independent, self-existent God.

I MIGHT further observe, that the author, page 63. preceding, and page 66. and 71. following the passage cited, asserts, that " this clause of one God " was inserted, to require our belief that there is but " one infinite, supreme, beginningless, and eternal " God; and that this one God, and none other, was " the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of all o- " ther beings whatsoever, almighty, maker of hea- " ven and earth." And that this clause was inserted in opposition to the heresy of the Marcionites, who asserted, that " there were two co-eternal indepen- " dent beings, the one a good God, the Father of " our Lord Jesus Christ, Author of the gospel, and " the Fountain, Source, and Origin of all good; " the other, an evil god, the creator of the world,— " and author of all evil." And I might also observe, that the learned author takes notice of a twofold paternity, included in the character of Father; the one, denoting that relation (75.), wherein he stands to

us creatures, as he is the cause, author, and origin "of all beings." The other, (page 79.) "That "peculiar relation wherein God stands to his Son, "that he is his Father, that he hath begotten him: "the manner whereof is peculiar, eminent, and ineffable, and is not only impossible to be explicated by "us; but such an attempt would be both perilous and "arrogant: for who can search out God to perfection?" It is plain, that it is only the last sense of paternity that is peculiar to the Father, in exclusion of the Son. The author no where excludes the Son from being Maker of heaven and earth. And it is certain, that, by the whole strain of the holy scriptures, and the concurring testimony of the ancient writers, the Son is declared to be the Creator of the universe, of angels, of men, and of all things. From these hints, and other passages that are to be met with in that celebrated author, it is very manifest, that the words above observed, as cited by Mr Simpson, make not in the least to his purpose, as they do not against mine.

That I may say one word more anent the charge of Sabellianism against the defenders of the numerical oneness of substance or essence, I shall only observe, that the Sabellians have been generally reckoned with the Patripassians †. Noetus taught, that the Father was not different from the Son; that there was but one person in God, who sometimes took the name of Father, and sometimes that of Son; who was born of a Virgin, and suffered on the cross. Sabellius seemed to own three persons; but considered them only as three different names and virtues. And if he be thought to have refined upon the Noetian scheme, it was (saith a learned author †) by denying

† Aug Hæres. 41. † D. Waterland's. def. page 334.

a God incarnate, after the example of the earlier heretics; and also he may be looked upon as holding nearly the same principles with the modern Socinians. But if we consider that substance or *substantia*, according to the common acceptation of the word among the Latins, and its definition among philosophers, is *ens per se existens*; and that, according to the plain principles of natural religion, it is both demonstrable that God exists, and that he is an independent and necessary Being or Substance, and that no other being or substance can possibly be such. The charge may be retorted against these, if any such there are, who contend that the substance is not one in number, and therefore certainly two or three in number; and at the same time suppose, that independence and necessary existence may be taken for the personal properties of the Father. For that substance alone, which is necessary and independent, must be God only in the proper sense of the word; which is in effect to say, that there is but one person, who is truly God.

It is our duty to believe, and live up to what is revealed in the holy scriptures concerning this incomprehensible mystery, and to beware of going upon our own fancies and conjectures, in a thing of this kind; which will be only a betraying too little reverence for the tremendous and unsearchable nature of God, and too high an opinion of our ownselves. I shall only say, that I have made it my business to keep close by the sentiments and expressions of such orthodox divines, as I have had occasion to see or consider upon this subject. And if I have happened, contrary to my design, to utter any thing amiss in such an incomprehensible mystery, I shall be heartily sorry for it, and ready to own it. I frankly acknow-

ledge, that I have borrowed with all freedom, from the celebrated authors that have handled this subject, both formerly and of late; and have commonly delivered myself in the words of some one or other of them, as thinking them better and more safe than my own. I trouble the reader no further, but recommend him, and my small endeavours, to the divine blessing.

JOHN i. 1. *And the* WORD *was* GOD.

CHAP. I.

The TEXT *explained.*

THE title given our Lord in the text is that of the *Word*. He is the eternal and essential *Word* *, by whom the heavens, and all their hosts, were made; and by whom the perfections, will, and counsels of God, have been revealed and manifested † to be the object of the eternal wonder of angels and men: and he is the scope and principal matter, both of the prophetical and promissory word. For which, and other reasons, our JESUS is here called the *Word*.

OUR evangelist having ascribed to the Lord Jesus

* Verbum substantiale non prolatum. Fulgent. lib. i.

† The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is revealed and manifested to angels and archangels, to principalities and powers, and to men, by his Word, who is his Son. Ireneus, lib. ii. cap. 56. Sermonem esse eam personam, cui competit loqui, quæ non nisi Deus loqui potest, et qui loquutus est cum Patre, quicquid loquutus est Pater, et in quo, et propter quem, Deus est loquutus, et potenti suo verbo operatur omnia, nominatim cujus alloquio, sponsione, intercessione, electi vivificantur, et sustentantur. Coc. Prin.

the character of the *Word*; a name by which the second person of the blessed Trinity was well known * among the Jews; he affirms of him that he was God in the beginning.

The term *God*, affirmed of the Son by the apostle, is not to be understood in a relative, subordinate, or improper sense; because a subordinate god is no god. And though magistrates are called gods, in respect of their office; and Moses is said to be a god to Pharaoh: yet the word *God* is affirmed of no creature in scripture, absolutely, and in the singular number, as it is here, and elsewhere, of the Son, without any limitation whatsoever †.

Nor doth the title *God*, either in this place, or in the scripture-notion of the word, imply dominion only; seeing the apostle rejects them as no gods, who are not gods by nature, Gal. iv. 8. We must conceive, that to make up the true scripture-notion of the word *God*, there must not only be dominion, but the divine nature, and all the divine perfections, as the foundation of that dominion.

To this purpose, when the prince of Tyre pretended to be God, he thought of something more than mere dominion of strength, and power invincible; and God was pleased to convince him of his folly, not by telling him how scanty his dominion was, or

* It is plain, that Plato, and other Grecians, borrowed the term λογος from the Jews, or their neighbours, the Phenicians and Chaldeans; and that the apostle John did not borrow this title from the Grecian Gentiles. See Gale's court of the Gentiles, page 2. book iii. and Grot. in Joel i. 1.

† See Dr Owen on the Heb. i. 1. and Dr Waterland's 1st defence, page 47. and Dr Calamy, page 6. Serm.

how low his office, but how weak, frail, and perishing his nature was; that he was man only, and not God, Ezek. xxviii. 2. 9. When the Lycaonians took Paul and Barnabas for gods, they answered them, by telling them they were weak, frail men, and had not a divine nature. We cannot imagine, without the greatest absurdity, that the Father commenced God, in the scripture-notion of the word, when he created the universe, and began to have dominion over it. In this very text of scripture, the Son is said to have been with God the Father in the beginning, *i. e.* before the creation; as therefore, in the scripture-notion of this term, the Father was God in the beginning, (that is, before the creation), and consequently before he had any relation to creatures, or dominion over them: so the Son, who was in the beginning, before all time, who was with the Father in the beginning, and who was God in the beginning, *i. e.* before the creation, was therefore God, in the proper scripture-notion of the word, before he had any relation to creatures, or dominion over them.

This verse, John i. 1. contains three propositions, in each of which the *Word* is the subject. In the second of these, it is affirmed, That the *Word* was with God, *i. e.* The Son was with the Father in the beginning. If he were not always with him, and inseparable from him, he could not be God in a proper sense. Some have alledged, that if the word *God*, when affirmed of the Son in the third proposition, be taken in the absolute, supreme, and proper sense of the word *God*, in the same manner as it is meant of the Father in the second proposition, that then the Son would be meant to be with *himself*. But it is replied, That the term *God* is taken personally, when meant of the Father in the second, and is to be taken essen-

tially, when affirmed of the Son in the third proposition. It is true, God the Son, with God the Father, supposes two persons truly distinct, but not two gods, one supreme and the other inferior. And although the article prefixed before Θεος, in the second proposition, is not prefixed before Θεος in the third proposition; yet this doth not in the least intimate, that the word *God* is not to be taken in the self-same, absolute, and supreme sense, in both propositions. For it is undeniable, that the word *God*, verse 18. of this chapter, is taken in the proper and supreme sense of the word, and yet there is no article prefixed.

THIS criticism about the prefixed article was first the observation of Asterius the Arian *; which further appears to be void of all foundation, if we consider, that where the true supreme God is professedly opposed to false gods, even there he is stiled Θεος, without any article prefixed, Gal. iv. 8. 9.; and where the Father is distinguished from the Son, he is called simply Θεος, Rom. i. 4. And further, the name of *God*, invested with an article, is elsewhere in the scriptures † attributed to our Saviour; for he is called "EMMANUEL, which, being interpreted, is "God with us." μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεος, Matth. i. 23.

AND Thomas, making a confession of his faith, which our Lod, in a particular manner, approved of,

* Athanas. orat. 2. contra Arianos.

† The *Ante Nicene* writers apply innumerable texts, wherein Θεος occurs with the article, in the LXX, to our Saviour Christ; as doth the apostle Paul, compare Numb. xxi. 5. 6. 7. 1 Cor. x. 9. Is. xlv. 22. 23. Rom. xiv. 11. Philip. ii. 10. Vide *Surenhus.* Concil. page 511. and Dr Pearson on the Creed, page 131.

expresseth it thus, "Thou art my Lord: thou art "my God, John xx. 28. ὁ Κύριός μου, καὶ ὁ Θεός μου.*

But that notwithstanding the cavils of adversaries, the word *God*, when affirmed of the Son in the third proposition, is to be taken in the absolute, supreme, and proper sense of the word, in the same manner as it is meant of the Father in the second proposition, will appear, with a convincing evidence, if we take but a passing view of text and context; for it is affirmed, that the "Word † was in the beginning." Though eternity have no beginning, and the sense of these words cannot be, In the beginning of eternity; yet eternity is before all things; and "In the be-"ginning," is a scripture-description of eternity, as is manifest, from Prov. viii. 23. where "from everlast-"ing," and "in the beginning before the earth was," are of the same import. And the apostle, saying, that, "in the beginning the Word was," doth as evidently express his eternity, as the scripture doth in those other phrases of, "before the world was," or, "before the foundation of the world," which more than once it insists on; and as the *Word* was in the beginning, and before the creation, so it is affirmed, that he was *with God*, *i. e.* the Father, at the creation, (to whom, no doubt, it was that God said, "Let us make man in our image, "after our likeness.") And further it is asserted,

* There is in the words an ellipsis of τὸ σὸ. But enough of this. The Greeks promiscuously use or omit the articles; whereof examples are innumerable.

† Sic enim loquitur Basil, tom. i. pag. 503. Εἰδὲ——Si, inquit, hanc tenueris vocem, in principio erat Sermo, nihil mali a malevolis adversariis patieris; si dicat, Si genitus est, non erat; tu dicas, Erat in principio.

That "in the beginning the Word was God *." Here, "in the beginning," must not be denied to the third proposition, because it cannot be denied to the first and second: therefore, "in the beginning," *i. e.* before the creation, before all time, when there was nothing but absolute eternity, "the Word was "God," the same God with whom he was. For we cannot, with any shew of reason, either imagine that he was with one God, and was another, because there can be no more *true* or *supreme* gods than one; or conceive, that the apostle should speak of one kind of god in the second, and of another in the third proposition; in the second, of a god eternal and independent; in the third, of a made and depending god; especially considering, that the eternal God was so constantly, among the Jews, called, "The "† Word;" which, we conceive, was the great reason why the apostle used this term.

And not only is the Son here called Θεος, which is sometimes the rendering of Jehovah, and therefore is a word of absolute signification; but it is said, that "all things were made by him ‡," who was

* Θεος καλεται, και Θεος εστι και εσται. Justin Martyr, dial. pag. 176.

† Gen. i. 27. We read, *Et creavit Deus hominem.* The Jerusalem Targum, *Verbum Domini creavit hominem.* Gen. iii. 8. *Audierunt vocem Domini Dei;* the Chaldee paraphrase has it, *Audierunt vocem Verbi Domini Dei.* This which the Chaldee paraphrase called *MEMRA*, the Hellenists named λογον, as appeareth by Philo the Jew, who wrote before the apostle John, and who attributes the creation of the world to this Λογος. See Dr Allix's judgment of the ancient Jewish church, chap. 10. and Dr Lightfoot's harmony of the evangelists, and Hor. Hib. *in locum.*

‡ *In principio erat Sermo, in quo principio scilicet, Deus fecit [illegible] et terram,* Tertul. adverf. Hermog. cap. 20. As

in the beginning, where we may observe a manifest allusion to the first words of Moses, Gen. i. 1. It is said, "In the beginning God created heaven, and the "earth:" so here, "In the beginning the Word "made all things." And seeing he was in the beginning, and before all things, and by his power gave a being to all things, we must acknowledge, that, in in the text, he is affirmed to be the true and supreme God, and God by nature; because nothing can pre-exist unto all creatures, but in the nature of God, which is eternal, unless we shall suppose a creature before the creation of any; and no being can create and give a being to all things, but the true and supreme God, who is himself independent, and necessarily existent. The creation of all things is an indisputable mark of the true supreme God; the distinguishing character by which he was to be known, and for which he was to be reverenced above all gods, Jer. x. 11. Rev. iv. 10. 11.; and, on account of which, he claims to himself all homage, worship, and adoration. It could not then, without the greatest absurdity, be supposed, that the eternal *Word*, who in the text is said to have been in the beginning, that is, before the creation, to have been with God the Father at the creation, and to whom, in the context, the creation of all things † is ascribed, is in the text

to the absurd glosses of the Socinians on the text, their pretences of a metaphorical creation, and the beginning, being the beginning of the gospel, see them refuted by Dr. Owen, against Biddel and others; as also the notion of the Word being an instrumental cause.

† The primitive writers frequently give it as their opinion, That the apostle John his expressly insisting on the Deity of Christ, in the beginning of his gospel, was with a view to condemn those who denied it, and ascribed the creation of the world to another Demiurgos, vid. Irenæ *adv. hær. Lib.* 3. *cap.* 11. Epiphan. *Lib.* 1. *Tom.* 2. Theodor. *Epitom. Hæret Lib.* 2.

denominated God, in an inferior, relative, and figurative sense.

We must therefore conclude, that the word God, when affirmed of the Son in the third proposition, is to be taken in the absolute, supreme, and proper sense of the word, in the same manner as it is meant of the Father in the second proposition: and consequently we are to believe, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the true and supreme God: which proposition we shall endeavour further to establish and illustrate in the sequel.

CHAP. II.

Our Lord JESUS CHRIST *called GOD in the holy scriptures.*

THE divinity of our Saviour is inculcated in such variety of methods, with that frequency and solemnity, throughout the whole Bible, that he who runs may read it. It is very legible in the books of Moses, more clearly revealed in the Psalms, and shines with a most convincing evidence in the writings of the prophets. It is stamped on every page of the gospels, and gloriously displayed in the epistles. Not only the miraculous works of our Saviour, but the most ignominious parts of his life, declare his Divinity. As none but God could do such works of wonder; so none but God could humble himself as he did. Some rays and tokens of his Godhead were discoverable, even in his most un-godlike appearance, "when wrapt in swaddling-clothes, and lying in a "manger;" enough to command the attendance of the heavenly host, to excite the curiosity of the eastern sages, and make the shepherds quit the care of their

flocks. Yea, so visible were the signatures of his divine nature, even while hanging on the cross, crowned with thorns, and pierced with nails, that the penitent thief was prompted thereby to apply to him, as the Lord and Proprietor of these heavenly mansions he desired an entrance into. Nor could the Roman centurion forbear leaving his testimony behind him, "Truly this was the Son of God." We are therefore directed, by our Lord himself, to "search the "scriptures;" for these are they that testify of him; and from them we deduce this, as our first argument.

I. OUR Lord Jesus Christ, not only in the text, but frequently in the scriptures, is called GOD; and that in such a manner, as by that name no other can be understood, but the one, eternal, true, and supreme God: and therefore he must be acknowledged as such.

THE most distinguishing divine names and titles are given to him. He is stiled, "The Most High," "The Only Lord God," "The Lord of all," "The "Lord of glory," "Our God and Saviour;" Luke i. 76. Jude 4. Acts x. 36. 1 Cor. ii. 3. 2 Pet. i. 1.; and that in such a way, as that the construction of the words seems plainly to intimate, that Jesus Christ is our God as well as our Saviour.

HE is Alpha and Omega, Rev. 1. 8. the Beginning and the Ending *; and this title is five times given him by the apostle John in the Revelation; and this is a proper title of God, and incommunicable to any other. Now this is ascribed to Christ, without any restriction or limitation; so that he is as truly the First and Last, even as the Father himself.

* Vide Place Disput. *de Christi. Divin.* Par. 1. page 387.

SUCH titles as these are evidently much too high, and tend to delude and impose upon us, if the Son were not true and real God, and by nature such.

FURTHER, It is Christ the Son that is spoken to, or denoted by that name *Elohim*, O God, Psal. xlv. 6. Septuagint ὁ Θεός, as being the true God by nature, though what is here affirmed be not as God, but as King of his church and people, as in another place, God is said "to redeem his church by his own "blood." Grotius himself grants, That the word *Elohim*, used here absolutely, signifieth as much as *Elohe Elohim*, the God of gods. It is true, he pretends it is not spoken of Christ in this place; and therefore renders the words, "God shall be thy seat "or throne for ever." But, in this instance, we have light enough to rebuke the boldness of this attempt: for the interpretation of Grotius, or others, is contrary to all old translations; contrary to the received sense of Jews and Christians of old, and particularly of the Targum on the Psalm, rendering the words, "Thy throne, O God, is in heaven for ever;" contrary to the contexture and design of the apostle Paul in his discourse, Heb. i. applying this text to the Son; and leaves no tolerable sense to the words themselves; as appears from this, that those who embrace this interpretation, cannot declare in what sense God is the throne of Christ. The words, "shall establish," make a new text, or lead the old utterly from the intention of the words, and is contrary to the constant use of the expression in scripture; for where-ever there is mention of "the throne of Christ," somewhat else, and not God, is intended thereby.

THE apostle John affirms, that he is the true God; "For we know," saith he, "that the Son of God is

"come; and hath given us an understanding, that we "may know him that is true: even in his Son Jesus "Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." 1 John v. 20. Though it be alledged by adversaries, that, in grammatical construction, these last words may be applied to the Father; yet a mere possibility, in respect of the grammatical construction, can never, with any shew of reason, be pleaded against the glaring evidences from the context, that these last words are by the apostle ascribed to the Son. Jesus Christ is the immediate antecedent, to which the relative may most properly be referred. The Son of God is he of whom the apostle chiefly speaketh. This is rendered as a reason why we are in him that is true, by being in his Son, to wit, because that Son is the true God; and, in the language of the apostle John, the constant title of our Saviour, is *eternal life*. In fine, since all these reasons may be drawn out of the text itself, why the title of the true God should be attributed to the Son, and no reason can be raised from thence why it should be referred to the Father; we must be convinced that our Lord Jesus Christ is in this place called the true God *.

He is stiled the "mighty God," Is. ix. 6.; and "God manifested in the flesh," 1 Tim. iii. 16. Where the name of God "absolutely taken, and "placed subjectively," is to be understood of Christ, in the six propositions delivered by the apostle in that text; because of him each one is true, and also of none but him. He was the Word, which was God, and was made flesh: upon him the Spirit descended at his baptism; and, after his ascension, de-

† *Vide* This text vindicated by Dr Calamy, Serm. page 57. 58. &c. *Hic agitur non solum de vero Deo, sed illo uno vero Deo, ut articulus in Græco additus indicat.* Catech. *Racov.*

scended upon his apostles, ratifying his commission, and confirming the doctrine they received from him: Wherefore he was "God justified in the Spirit." His nativity the angels celebrated; in the discharge of his office they ministered unto him; at his resurrection and ascension they were present, always ready to confess and adore him: he was therefore God seen of angels. The apostles preached unto all nations; and he whom they preached was Jesus Christ; he was therefore "God preached unto the Gen-"tiles." It was John Baptist's commission, and of all succeeding ministers, to speak to the people, that they should believe on him: he was therefore "God "believed on in the world." When he had been forty days on earth after his resurrection, he was taken visibly up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father: wherefore he was "God received up into glory *.

THE Son was in the form of God, and that so as to be "equal with God," before his "taking upon him "the form of a servant," Phil. ii. 7. And his being "in "the form of God," intimates his as fully partaking of the divine nature, as his being in the form of a servant, does his partaking of the human nature. And it is declared, that his being thus "equal with

* Θεὸς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκὶ, τυτέςιν ὁ δημιυργὸς, *Chrysost. in locum.* Τις ὁ ἐν σαρκὶ φανερωθεὶς; ἢ δηλον, ὁτι παντη καὶ παντως ὁ ἐκ Θευ πατρος λογος ὢτω γαρ ἐςαι μεγα το της ευσεβειας μυςηριον. Θεος ἐφανερώθην σαρκὶ. *Cyril. Epist. ad Pulcher. et Eud.* So also Theodor. It is a groundless pretence, that Θεος was interpolated by the Nestorians, for so they had overthrown their own doctrine; and the Catholic Greeks read it Θεος before the time of Nestorius, so *Chrysost. &c.* So the Greek copies, and so the Arabick.

"God," was what "he thought no robbery." † He had an unquestionable, indisputable right to it. It is the highest injustice to call it in question. He is said to be Emmanuel, God with us. And he is stiled, "the great God and our Saviour." And as he that is our Saviour is "the great God," he cannot certainly be an inferior, a subordinate god ‡.

The apostle Paul, speaking to the church of Ephesus, saith, "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the "flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made "you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he "hath purchased with his own blood." These words clearly contain this proposition, God hath purchased the church with his own blood: this God may, and must be understood of Christ; it may, because

† *Esse autem in forma Dei, non alia intelligentia est, quam in Dei manere natura.* Hilar. *de Trinit.* L. 12. *Pariari Deo.* Tertul. *Esse se æqualem Deo.* Cyprian. Ισον *et* Ιϱα are indifferently used by the Greeks, as *Pindarus Olymp.* Od. 2. *Qui unus locas si rectè expenditur, adversus omnes hæreses adversus Jesu Christi Domini nostri personam repellendæ sufficiet* Bishop Bull D. F. N. on the text. Though Αϱπαγμα ηγεισθαι, may signify to arrogate or assume, yet 'Αϱπαγμον ηγεισθαι, will not admit such a sense, according to the genius of the Greek tongue, if rightly rendered, he thought it *no robbery*. Thus *Faustinus De Trinitate*, expresses his meaning of this text, *Si vere homo est Christus, cum formam servi accipit, vere quoque Deus est, cum in forma Dei esse perhibetur; nec alia ratione æqualem diceret, nisi in forma Dei esse verum Deum voluisset intelligi.*

‡ Dr Clark owns, that the words, Tit. 2. 13. will bear this construction. This expression, *The great God*, is, by Clement of Alexandria, understood of God the Son alone, Protrep. *ad* Gentes, page 3.; as also by Gregor. Nysene Cont. Eunom. page 265.: and upon occasion of Jerome his applying this text to Christ, Father Simon freely owns *Histoire Crit. des Comment. du* N. T. p. 235. that this is one of the plainest texts we have, to prove the Divinity of Jesus Christ.

he hath; it must, because no other person, which is called god, hath so purchased the church.

This expression cannot be attributed to the Father, because this blood signifieth death; and though the Father be Omnipotent, and can do all things, yet he cannot die. Besides, it is very observable, that this particular phrase, of "his own blood," is, in the scripture, put by way of opposition "to the blood of another;" though any should say, the Father hath purchased us, because he gave his Son to be a ransom for us; yet none can say, that he did it "by his own blood:" because we must acknowledge, that the blood and death was of another than of the Father. Thus, in this text, the name of God, which, in this place, is taken absolutely, and placed subjectively, is ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is declared, as to John the Baptist, "That "many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the "Lord their God," Luke i. 16. And Dr Clark himself owns, † That this, in strictness of construction, must necessarily be understood of Christ. And all the fulness of the Godhead is said to have dwelt in him bodily, Col. ii. 9. Where the apostle speaks not of Christ's doctrine, but his person. And he does not say, that God was in Christ, or did abide or dwell in him, as he was said to do in Zion, and in the saints; but that "all the fulness of the Godhead "dwelt in him bodily;" which was never said of any other. And this Godhead cannot but signify the divine nature and essence.

He is stiled *Lord of lords*, Rev. xix. 16.; which is a title peculiar to the great Jehovah, or only *true*

† Scripture-doctrine of the Trin. No. 534.

God, and of the ſame high ſignification with that of "God of gods," Deut. x. 17. "The Lord "your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a "great God, mighty and terrible," *&c.* And in the New Teſtament, the great God is likewiſe deſcribed as "the bleſſed and only Potentate, King of "kings, and Lord of lords," 1 Tim. vi. 15.

† He is declared to be "God over all, bleſſed "for ever," Rom. ix. 5. ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων not *in omnibus* as *Er. ſm.* nor *ſuper omnes*, but *ſuper omnia*, as the ancients and the Vulg. tranſ. This character, here aſcribed to Chriſt, is given to the moſt High God, as diſtinguiſhed from all creatures whatſoever, Rom. i. 25. where the apoſtle charges the Gentiles with "worſhipping and ſerving the creature more than "(or beſide) the Creator; who is God bleſſed for "evermore. Amen." The creatures the Gentiles ſerved, were dæmons, and ſuch deceaſed heroes as they ſuppoſed to be ſubordinate powers, but raiſed to the dignity of gods; from all theſe, the apoſtle diſtinguiſhes the true God, the "Creator of the "world," by this title, "God bleſſed for evermore;" *q. d.* That God, to whom alone the bleſſing and adoration of all intelligent creatures is and will be for ever due. The Polytheiſm of the Pagan world is here expoſed by the apoſtle, repreſenting the weakneſs and folly of any ſubordinate deities under one as ſupreme, which the God of Iſrael always diſclaimed. His common language was this, "I am the "Lord; and there is none elſe: there is no god "beſides me," Iſ. xlv. 5. "Is there a god beſides me? "yea, there is no god; I know not any," Iſ. xliv. 8. "I am God, and there is none like me," Iſ. xlvi. 9.

† *Vide* Mr Boyſe' vindication of the Deity of our Saviour.

"Before me there was no god formed, neither shall "there be after me." It is therefore the greatest absurdity and impiety for any that call themselves Christians, to talk of one God that is supreme, and another that is God * in a subordinate sense! It is observable, that where any creatures are in the New Testament called *Blessed*, the word is not ευλογητος, but ευλογημενος. Nor is that observation of Dr Hammond groundless, (as Monsieur Le-Clerk would represent it) concerning the ordinary custom of the Jews, to add to the name of God this title of † "blessed for "evermore." And had not the apostle believed our Saviour to be the true and supreme God, he could not have put a greater stumbling-block before the Jews to harden them in their infidelity, than by giving him a title and character, which they had always appropriate to the great JEHOVAH; and which they could not but take for an ascription of Divinity unto him, in the most strict and proper sense. Farther, the Father cannot in this text be referred to, as "God blessed "ed for ever," without manifest force. And supposing the Son to be referred to, to bring in an exception of one above him, when he is expressly declared to be "God over all," is so plainly calculate to serve an hypothesis, that it can affect none, that sincerely desire to know "the truth as it is in Jesus." I shall only add, that the addition of *Amen* is no proof at all of the words being a formal doxology, and not an assertion; because it is elsewhere added

* *Irenæus* seems to have laid in against the distinction between the supreme and a subordinate god, when he says, that he that has any one above him, and is in the power of another, cannot be said to be God. Adv. Hær. l. 4. cap. 5.

† The *blessed One* signified as much in the Jewish language as the God of Israel; hence are so frequent in the Rabbins, the *blessed One*, the *infinite blessed One*.

upon the mention of this title, where there is only an assertion, and no formal doxology, Rom. i. 25. It is very manifest from what has been said, that our blessed Saviour in the text †, is declared to be "God "over all, blessed for evermore;" as he is elsewhere said to be "Lord over all," and the "Lord by "whom are all things," Rom. x. 12. 1 Cor. viii. 6.

And there being no one name of God that is more celebrated, or owned to be more incommunicable, than that of Jehovah, I think it not improper to add, that the Son has that name also given him, (of which more in its place), Zech. xii. 10. John xix. 37. Hos. i. 7. Luke ii. 11. The Son then being Jehovah as well as the Father, must be true and supreme God as well as he. At which we have not the least occasion to be surprised, since "he and the Father "are one," John x. 30. and xiv. 10. Rev. xxi. 22. and xxii. 1. and xxi. 23.; that is, one God. So one, as that "the Son is in the Father, and the Fa-"ther in the Son;" and they are represented as one temple, and as having but one throne, and as making one light.

† Cyprian produces this text, Rom. ix. 5. to prove *quod Deus Christus*; and reckoneth it among the rest, in which he is expressly called God. *Non solum Pater Deus est, sed etiam erunt Haretici concedunt, sed etiam Filius; quod, vel ut nolunt, cogantur fateri, dicente Apostolo, qui est super omnia Deus benedictus in saecula.* Aug. de Trin. l. 2. cap. 13. *Novat. de Trinit.* useth the same argument, as doth Tertul. Advers. Prax. and Origen. ad Rom. 9. 5. Athanas. Orat. 4. C. Ar. Hilar. l. 4. And this text is quoted in proof of the eternal Deity of the Son, in the first council at Antioch against Paul of Samosatum. That the word God was originally in this text, is certain from the ancient writers, and from what Dr Mill has advanced. And from Euseb. H. E. l. 8. c. 11.

CHAP. III.

Our Lord JESUS CHRIST *the only true* GOD.

IT has been well observed *, that it is absolutely necessary to believe the proper Divinity of the Son of God, in order to form right apprehensions of the ineſtimable love of God the Father, in giving his Son: and of the love of the Son, in undertaking the great work of our redemption; which is magnified in ſcripture to ſuch a ſuperlative degree, as is not to be reconciled to the love of a being leſs than truly divine.

AMONG other things that Mr Simpſon has taught, to ſubvert the myſtery of God's grace and love manifeſted in the goſpel, and the proper ſupreme Deity of Chriſt, the baſis of the whole, it has been found, by the venerable aſſembly, that the profeſſor hath vented or taught, that the title of the "only true "God," John xvii. 1. may be taken, and, by ſome authors, is taken in a ſenſe that includes the perſonal property of the Father, and ſo not belonging to the Son †.

IT has been made very manifeſt, by learned writers ‡ on this ſubject, that the Son is called, and therefore is the true God, 1 John v. 20. ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεός; and if truly ſo, then he is the only true God ‖, becauſe there is but "one, the only living and true "God." God is not only one, but hath an unity peculiar to himſelf, by which he is only God, and

* Mr Johnſon, ſermon 2. page 6.
† Proceed. Aſſ. 1728, page 41.
‡ Dr Calamy on the text. Biſhop Pearſon. Dr Owen.
‖ Catech. Racov. above cited.

not only by way of actuality, but also of possibility. It having been proved, that worship, due only to God, is given to him; and that the names, peculiar to the one God, are ascribed to him in scripture: it is very evident, that he is the only true God.

I. But more particularly, the true and proper Deity of Christ is plainly taught in the holy scriptures. In them the works, peculiar to the only true God, are ascribed to him. Our Jesus wrought out the redemption of his people, which was a work infinitely greater than what all the creatures could have done. Hence, in Isaiah's prophecies, and elsewhere, he that stiles himself the Redeemer, declares that he is the only infinite Jehovah. However, some pretend, that God may accept of a satisfaction for sin, of greater or less value, as he thinketh fit. We must look on this as a vain pretence, seeing God hath made no such declaration in his word. On the contrary, God the Son is said to "purchase the church "with his own blood," Is. xli. 14. and xliv. 6. 24. Jer. l. 34. Psal. xix. 14. Hos. i. 7. Acts xx. 28. And as nothing greater could be offered to God the Father, than the blood of his only-begotten Son; so we may reasonably suppose, that nothing less could be accepted, either in respect of sin for which, or an offended God to whom, this sacrifice was made; the one being of infinite demerit, the other of infinite dignity, and both inferring the necessity of a suitable satisfaction. Further, the scriptures set forth God's holiness and vindictive justice as *essential** ; and therefore necessary excellencies and perfections of his nature. They set forth Christ, in *himself*, as a sufficient atonement or propitiation for the sins of an

* Vide Owen dial. de just. vind.

elect world. Our salvation, throughout the whole New Testament, is ascribed to his merits and satisfaction, to the virtue and efficacy of his precious blood. But how could this be, if there were no merit in his blood? and merit there could be none, were it not the blood of one, who is truly God as well as man. Seeing there can be nothing more repugnant to scripture and reason, than to imagine it possible for a creature to merit of God; for "who hath first given "to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?" Shall the thing formed say to its former, Thou art my debtor, pay me that thou owest? Every creature derives, as his being, so his worth and power from God; and no creature can possibly advance so near his Creator, but that there will still be an infinite distance between them; and yet the nearer he approaches, the less able will he be to plead any merit, since his own obligations to gratitude and obedience must rise in proportion to the degrees of excellency he has received.

He is said to create all things; a work peculiar to the only true God, "who stretcheth forth the hea-"vens alone, and by himself." When it is said, that God made the world by Christ, Heb. i. 2. the preposition διὰ signifying *by* or *through*, points out the order of working amongst the persons of the glorious Trinity. The Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit, is said to produce the work; yet all are the same one principal efficient Cause.

He wrought miracles by his own proper power, both in his own person, and by his disciples and apostles; and none but the only true God can work a proper miracle.

Again, Christ works regeneration and grace in his people. He forgives sin, and justifies them; sends the Holy Spirit, and sanctifies them, Matth. ix. 6. Eph. v. 26. Heb. ii. 11. John xv. 26.

The work of judging the world is committed to him, "That all men may honour the Son, as they "honour the Father." Through the whole scripture, it is declared, that the Judge of the world is the supreme Being, the only true God. And none but the omniscient almighty Jehovah can accomplish that glorious and solemn work, Gen. xviii. 25. Rom. iii. 6. Psal. l. and xcvi. Rev. ii. 17. 2 Thess. ii. 8.

In fine, our Lord Jesus Christ not only quickens dead souls in the ministry of the gospel, and will raise dead bodies at the last day; but he raised himself from the dead by his own power. He says, "No man ta-"keth my life from me: I have power to lay it down, "and I have power to take it again," John x. 18.; intimating, in the strongest terms, that this almighty power was inherent in him: and that he would exert this power, he plainly tells, "Destroy this temple, and "in three days I will raise it up," John ii. 19. 21. Than which there could not be a more convincing proof given of the truth of his doctrine, and particularly of this fundamental article of our faith, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the only * true God.

The Socinians contend, that God the Father *only*

* Καὶ ἀληθῶς ἐπαθεν, ὡς καὶ ἀληθῶς ἀνέστησεν ἑαυτον. Ignat. ad Smyrn. *Non enim Pater solus Filium suscitavit*, de quo dictum est ab apostolo, *propter quod Deus eum exaltavit*, sed etiam Dominus seipsum, *id est*, corpus suum: unde dicit, *Solvite templum hoc, et in triduo suscitabo illud.* Aug. de Verb. Domin. Serm. 8. Vide Ditton on the resurrection.

raised Christ to life, and that he himself did only lift and raise his body out of the grave. But this answer is a mere shift; for, according to this sense of the words, all the dead might be said to raise themselves at the last day: but to raise a body which is dead, is, in the language of the scriptures, to give life unto it; which is no less an argument of Omnipotence, and therefore of true Deity, than, by creation, to make that something which before was nothing.

II. The attributes which belong to the only true God, and are therefore undoubtedly infinite, belong to the Son, and are ascribed to him in scripture; from whence it follows, that he is the only true God.

It shall be shewn, by and by, that our Lord Jesus Christ is absolutely eternal, self-existent, and necessarily existent: all which demonstrate his proper and true Deity.

Omniscience is most certainly an incommunicable attribute of God: for who, but God, can know all things? Now, this belongs to our blessed Saviour, who "knew all men, and what was in man," John ii. 24. 25. The apostle Peter, applying to him directly, saith, without any figure in the words, "Lord, thou "knowest all things *," John xxi. 17. It deserves our observation, that either that saying was strictly true, or it was directly blasphemous.

The latter cannot be imagined, else our Lord had signified his abhorrence in such case; had he been aware, that he had attributed to him somewhat that is peculiar to God, if it had not truly belonged to him.

* Vide Placæi disput. par. iii. pag. 221.

NOTHING can be more peculiar to God, than the knowing all things, even the hearts of men. "Thou, "even thou only," says Solomon, "knowest the "hearts of all the children of men," 1 Kings viii. 39. This knowledge is affirmed to belong to him by the apostle John, with the utmost emphasis; for, in his Revelation, we have this remarkable passage, "And all the churches shall know, that I am he "which searcheth the reins and hearts *." Compare Jer. xvii. 10. with Rev. ii. 23.

HE knows the Father, which is more than to know all other things: "Neither knoweth any man "the Father, but the Son," Matth. xi. 27. "As "the Father knows me, even so know I the Father," John x. 15. Our Lord's omniscience is manifestly asserted in the scripture, in the very same terms in which that of the only true God is described.

SOME talk in new terms of a *relative omniscience*. Were it not better to say plainly, that he (Christ) is not omniscient, than to speak of a relative omniscience, which is really no omniscience, unless an angel, or a man be omniscient, because he knows all things which he knows? Matth. xxiv. 36. and Mark xiii. 32. is plainly meant only of the human nature, and is to the same effect with Luke ii. 52. "That he increased "in wisdom," which cannot be literally understood of the Λογος with any consistency, even upon the Arian hypothesis. As to the Son's not knowing the day of the last judgment, Dr Lightfoot † his explanation deserves to be remarked. "It is one thing," says he, "to understand the Son of God barely and

* Ουδεν λαμβανει τον Κυριον αλλα τα κρυπτα ημων ειδως αυτος εστιν. Ignat. epist. ad Ephes.

† Vide Dr Lightfoot's works, vol. ii. page 364.

" abstractly for the second person in the holy Trinity; " and another to understand him for the Messias, or " that second person incarnate. To say, the second " person of the Trinity knows not something is blas- " phemous; to say so of the Messias is not so, who " nevertheless was the same with the second person " of the Trinity. For although the second person, " abstractly considered, according to his mere Deity, " was co-equal with the Father, co-omnipotent, co- " omniscient, co-eternal with him, *&c.*; yet Messias, " who was God-man, considered as Messias, was a " servant and messenger of the Father," *&c.*

To this objected text Hilary † returns this answer, That as it was after the infirmity of his flesh, that he (our Lord) was under necessity of enduring weeping, sleep, want, weariness, and fear; so also was it according to his human nature, that he professed ignorance of that day and hour.

Our Lord, partaking of a double nature, had a double understanding; the one infinite, the other finite; the one omniscient, and the other capable of ignorance in some things. In the one he differs not from the Father, though he does in the other. When therefore he is said " to know all things," we are to take it as meant of his divine understanding: and when his knowing any thing is denied, we are to take it as meant of his human understanding. And that this was our Saviour's true meaning, in the text referred to, is plain, if we consider that he speaks of himself as he differed from the Father, and had an understanding that was separate from his, which

† Hilar. lib. 9. de Trinit. With him agree Chrysost. Athan. Theodor. and Greg. Naz.

was only as he was man. And that his denying his knowing the precise day and hour of the last judgment in that capacity, was sufficient to check the curiosity of the apostles, whom it little became to desire to know more than the Son himself knew, as he was man.

IMMENSITY is another attribute peculiar to the only true God. He is said "to fill heaven and "earth," Jer. xxiii. 24. In like manner, our Lord saith of himself, "No man hath ascended up to "heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even "the Son of man which is in heaven," John iii. 13. And so, in other places, he affirms his being in heaven, at the same time when he was upon the earth, whereby he declares the immensity of his nature *, Matth. xxviii. 20. and xvi. 20. Rom. i. 7. 1 Cor. i. 3. 2 Cor. i. 2. He promised to be with his servants at all times, (all days), to the end of the world; particularly, to be in the midst of their religious assemblies through the whole earth, where he is worshipped by his people, who pray to him, as well as the Father, for grace, mercy, and peace: a convincing argument, both of his omniscience and omnipresence, since none can lawfully pray to any one, but upon this firm persuasion, that the person he prays to, is every-where present, and knoweth all things; which the church, his body, may lawfully do, seeing "he filleth all in "all," Eph. i. 23.

INFINITE and essential holiness is a characteristic of the only true God, who is said to be "glo-

* Si hommo tantummodo Christus, quomodo adest ubique invocatus, cum hæc hominis natura non sit, sed Dei. Novat. cit. apud Bull.

"rious in holiness," Exod. xv. 11. This attribute, as it were, is the glory and refulgency of all his other excellencies. In a suitableness to this, when the seraphims beheld the ineffable glory of Christ, they celebrated this perfection of his holiness, "covering "their faces and their feet with their wings," Is. vi. comp. John xii. 41. in a sense of their creature-distance, and as being unable to bear the dazzling beams of divine glory; "one cried to another, and "said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the "whole earth is full of his glory †."

Another attribute proper to God, is unchangeableness: "I am the Lord; I change not," Mal. iii. 6. Psal. cii. 27.; which is ascribed to our Lord Jesus by the apostle, "They shall perish; but thou re-"mainest.——They shall be changed; but thou art "the same, and thy years shall not fail," Heb. i. 11. 12. And "he is the same yesterday, to-day, "and for ever." "And though the doctrine of "Christ, once taught by the apostles, ought to be "preserved unchanged," which Dr Clark represents to be the meaning of the last-cited text; and we wish that he and others had shown a greater regard to such a sense of the words; yet it is plain, the text doth refer rather to the dignity of Christ's person than the stability of his doctrine, and is designed to represent, as a great duty, constantly to adhere to Jesus Christ, who is not a mutable Being, capable of failing, or disappointing the expectations of his servants, but is the same eternally and unalterably.

The only true God is incomprehensible by all finite minds: for "who, by searching, can find out

† Vide Zanch. in Is. vi.

"God, even the Almighty, to perfection?" Job xi. 7. So our Lord Jesus, his name is ineffable, his nature unsearchable, by all created beings. "And the An-"gel of the Lord," our Jesus, as is plain from the context, "said unto him, Why askest thou thus after "my name, seeing it is secret?" Judg. xiii. 18. *i. e.* hidden from mortal men, or Wonderful, as the word signifies, such as thou canst not comprehend: as if he had said, My nature or essence (which is often signified by name in scripture) is incomprehensible. In like manner, Agur saith of him, "What is his "name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst "tell?" Prov. xxx. 4. So unsearchable is the love of Christ, that it "passeth knowledge," Eph. iii. 19. And so incomprehensible is he himself, that "no "man knoweth the Son but the Father," Matth. xi. 27.

OMNIPOTENCE is another distinguishing character of the only true God. He is the "Lord God Al-"mighty," 2 Cor. vi. 18. In the same terms it is asserted, that our Lord Jesus is "the mighty God," Is. ix. 6. Rev. i. 8. and the Almighty, (ὁ παντοκράτωρ.) Nothing more certain (saith the learned Dr Water-land) than that very text, Rev. i. 8. was understood by the Ante-Nicene writers, in general, of God the Son †. His omnipotency, as it is in these, and other places, plainly declared; so it hath been manifested in his creating, upholding, and governing the world; in redeeming his people by his merit; in renewing and sanctifying them by his Spirit; in the miracles he wrought in his life; and in raising himself from the dead.

† Bishop Bull animad. on G. Clark. I answer, Tertullian "calls him by that name (of God Almighty) in that very place "against Praxeas. C. 17." Vide Hippol. Cont. Noet. c. 6. Athan. page 554. Greg. Naz orat. 35. cit. a Wat. page 351.

It is very manifest, that our Jesus is the only true God; and that therefore the title of the only true God doth agree to him, and cannot be taken in a sense that includes the Father's personal property, no more than the title of the one Lord can be taken for the personal property of the Son; and therefore not applicable to the Father †. The Father (John xvii. 3.) is not called "the only true God," in opposition to the Son, or exclusive of him. It is meant in opposition to idols only, as all antiquity has thought ‡; and it is manifest from the context, that the Son is not excluded, but included in the "only true God:" for it is affirmed to be eternal life to know Jesus Christ the Son, which could not be, if he were not truly God; and if truly God, he must be the only true God. It is plain, from what has been noticed from Athanasius, in the margin, that it was not his opinion, that the title of the only true God is to be taken for the personal property of the Father. And all that Bishop Pearson says, is, "That the Father is stiled the *only true God*;" but

† Si enim, ut existimant Ariani, Deus Pater solus est Deus, eadem consequentia solus erit Dominus Jesus Christus, et nec Pater erit Dominus, nec Filius Deus. Sed absit. Hieron. com. in Ephes. c. 4. v. 5.

‡ Igitur ubi Patrem Deum, et solum quidem credimus, oportet simul cum Patre Filium et Spiritum Sanctum attendere, non excludere; quia ad Patrem Filius et Spiritus Sanctus sic pertinent, ut sine illis ne quidem cogitari possit.——Porro voluere id bene attendi veteres, Patrem unum Deum appellari non ut Filio aut Spiritui Sancto opponeretur, sed cuilibet disjuncto Deo, aut Gentilium falsis numinibus, sic Athanasius orat. 4. c. Arianos. Dicta illa, Deut. vi. 4. John xvii. 3. De unitate solius veri Dei prolata esse, ait, non ad demolitionem illius, qui dicit, ego sum veritas, sed ad ablationem illorum qui non sunt veri natura, uti Pater et Filius. Athan. cit. a Leyd.

it cannot be supposed, that he means that the Son is excluded from that title, or that it is to be taken for the Father's personal property, because he contends for the numerical oneness; and elsewhere asserts, "That "Jesus Christ is the true JEHOVAH, who hath that "being, which is originally and eternally of itself †.

OUR Confession, chap. 8. § 2. asserts, "That the "Son is very and eternal God." And Larger Cat. anf. to quest. 9. it is said, "There be three persons "in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the "Holy Ghost; and these three are one, true, eternal "God, the same in substance, equal in power and "glory." According to our standards, the Son is very and eternal God. The three persons of the blessed Trinity, are the one, true, eternal God; in substance the same; in power and glory equal: which is the same thing, as if it had been said in so many express words, "The Son is the only true God."

CHAP. IV.

Our Lord JESUS CHRIST *self-existent*, or *independent*.

THE three persons of the adorable Trinity are so distinct, that one of them neither is, nor can be other. Such a distinction must be allowed betwixt Father, Son, and Spirit, as may be sufficient to answer the parts and purposes that are severally assigned them in the Christian œconomy. They have different personal properties assigned them; different things are spoken of them; and they are spoken of in a different order in the holy scriptures.

† Bishop Pearson on the Creed, art. 2. conclusion, page 158.

Though the Father is distinguished from the Son, and Father and Son are distinct from the Holy Spirit, yet are they not distinguished by any thing that is proper, peculiar, or essential to the Deity. Though they are distinguished one from another by proper characters; yet are all essential attributes and operations of the Deity common to them all, and the divine nature is equal in them all.

As the Sabellian scheme takes away the Deity of the Son, and reduces the Holy Ghost to nothing, making Father and Son not only of one essence or substance, but of one *hypostasis*, with a nominal distinction only; their Trinity was one God, acting in three different dispensations, under the law, the gospel, and the effusion of the Spirit, with a deified man under the second. Whosoever pretend to own the Deity of the Son and Spirit, but, at the same time, contend for a superiority, and a greater excellence in the Father, are really Arians, though they disown it. This scheme was brought out of Platonism into Christianity; and that by which it is distinguished, is, the holding three unequal persons, one independent and self-existent, and the other two deriving a dependent existence from the first; which, in the issue, is no more than one God, and two excellent creatures.

The orthodox distinguish betwixt essential and personal *Aseity*. They ascribe the essential *Aseity* to the Son and Spirit, by which the Deity, communicated to the Son and Spirit, is *a se*; because, if the Deity they possess, were not *a se*, it would not be the true Deity. They deny the personal *Aseity*; because, though the Son, as well as the Spirit, be Αυτοθεος, yet not Αυταρχοντα.

The Venerable Assembly having † considered this proposition libelled against Mr Simpson, *viz.* "That "the independency of the Deity of our Lord Jesus "Christ is a thing we know not;" they found the article relevant, but not proven. It being manifest, from what shall be advanced in the sequel, that Mr Simpson, in some papers under his hand, given in by him since the Assembly 1727, judged in the proof the foresaid article, hath attacked and impugned the independence and self-existence of our Lord Jesus Christ. And it being the design of this Essay, to vindicate the honour, and assert the true and supreme Deity of our blessed Saviour; it will not, I hope, be misconstructed, if I consider a little, in what terms he hath delivered himself upon this subject.

Mr Simpson (Proceed. Ass. 1728. page 40.) expresseth himself thus: "Our late English writers, "who write best against Atheists, they prove against "them the very thing which the scripture and our "Confession call *the personal property of the Father*, "*viz.* That there must be, or necessarily exist, some "first principle, or origin of all other persons or "things, which is absolutely of none, or unoriginated, which Scripture, and our Confession, declare "plainly to be the personal property of the Father." He adds, "They" who handle the argument best against the Atheists, from the principles of natural religion, "are far enough from calling it the personal "property of the Father, or from speaking, in these "dissertations, of a plurality of divine persons:—yet "they prove against them the very thing which the "Scripture, and our Confession, calls the personal "property of the Father." But, in my humble o-

† State, page 183. 185.

pinion, if they prove against them the very thing, it is nothing to the purpose, whether they call it the personal property of the Father or not. And it is much to our present purpose to remark, that the very thing they prove against Atheists, from the principles of natural religion, in Mr Simpson's opinion, is the personal property of the Father.

FARTHER, he says, with a view, I suppose, to smoothe the matter as far as he can, "That they," these authors, "lay aside the use of the word *cause*, "in its ordinary meaning."

THE main point of Infidelity among Atheists, is their denying the being of God. These who write against them, prove, that there must needs be some first principle or origin of all other persons or things whatsoever, which is absolutely of none, *i. e.* that derives being from no other being, and which is the first cause and fountain of all being. And seeing this is both a good and common argument, well improved by these that write best against Atheists, demonstrating the being of God *a posteriori*, reasoning from the effects to the first cause, which must necessarily be self-existent; it is not easily to be understood, how, in managing this argument accurately, they should lay aside the use of the word *cause* in its ordinary meaning, upon which the force of their argument depends, and, at the same time, fix upon some extraordinary meaning of the word *cause*, which is not demonstrable from the principles of natural religion; and that to little or no purpose, as to the main design of their argument; seeing Mr Simpson owns, they are far enough from calling it the Father's personal property, or speaking in these differtations of a plurality of divine persons.

That I may not impose a worse sense upon Mr Simpson's words, than they bear in their native meaning, it will be fit to consider his notion of person, (State, page 94.) He says, "The Father, "Son, and Holy Ghost, are, in our Confession of "Faith and Catechisms, called three persons, with- "out the least hint given, that the word is not to be "taken in its proper meaning; in which sense there- "fore I must explain it;—especially since the divine "persons, both in Scripture and our Confession, are as "plainly represented to be distinct intelligent agents, "as they are therein represented to be any way "whatsoever distinguished from one another."

And, page 93. so far as the defendant can learn, the proper meaning of the English word person is "an intelligent agent, which properly signifies a "living, understanding, active principle of working "or doing, to which any work or deed done is a- "scribed, as to its particular cause; in which sense "the word is taken, Heb. i. 3.; where it is meant "of the person of the Father, where he is manifestly "distinguished from the person of the Son." From all which, it is very plain, that, according to Mr Simpson, the three persons of the adorable Trinity are three proper persons, in the proper, *i. e.* ordinary meaning of the word person, among men †. That a proper person is an intelligent agent, or a living, understanding, active principle of working; and that the person of the Father, as distinguished from the

† State, page 115. wit. 4. depones, That, in the said former years, the professor, when explaining the term person, gave the following caution, *viz Persona non hic sumitur eodem sensu ac quando applicatur hominibus, sed sensu analogica.* But, in the latter end of the year 1725, he gave no such caution, nor since, to his remembrance. Vid. wit. 5 and wit. 15, &c.

person of the Son, is such a distinct, living, understanding principle of working :—and that since they are distinct intelligent Agents, according to him, the Father is therefore one distinct intelligent Agent, and understanding principle of operation, and the Son another †.

We must here remember, that the Venerable Assembly found the fourth article of the libel against Mr Simpson, *viz.* his teaching, as his own opinion, that the three persons of the Trinity are not to be said to be numerically one in substance or essence; both relevant, and sufficiently proven.

These who write best against Atheists, who deny the being of a God, they prove against them, that there must needs be some intelligent Agent or separate Being, which is the first cause of all other beings, which is absolutely independent and self-existent, and upon which all other beings do depend. This is a primary and essential attribute and perfection of the one true God, demonstrable from the principles of natural religion; and yet affirmed by Mr Simpson to be the Father's personal property. According to Mr Simpson's own scheme, just now taken notice of, the Father and Son are not of one substance in number: they are therefore distinct substances. The Father an unoriginated substance, the Son an originated substance. The Father one intelligent agent, absolutely of none, *i. e.* of no other person, of no other living, understanding principle of working; the Son, another intelligent Agent distinct from

† Brown, wit. 6. depones, the professor said, That, in the Trinity, there are three beings: and so doth wit. 7. vide wit. 15. If the quotation, page 91. be to his purpose, he seems, by consequence, to ascribe to the *Divine Persons* different understandings and wills.

the Father, is of another person; *i. e.* the Father, who is another living, understanding principle of working, distinct from the Son.

I LEAVE it to the reader to judge, if two distinct intelligent Agents; two distinct, living, understanding principles of working; two distinct substances, the one originated, the other unoriginated, are not two separate beings, and two persons, in the proper and ordinary meaning of the word person among men, *i. e.* distinguished by their distinct substances, and not merely by their personal properties.

THAT which is incumbent on me to prove, is, that the Son is the same independent being and substance that the Father is: that he is self-existent, as well as the Father; and has received being from no other being or prior cause.

THAT we may give the meaning of that term *self-existence*, when affirmed of the Son †, as well as of the Father, we may only take notice, that self-existence, or independence, is an essential and primary perfection of God; it being manifest, that, in the subordination of causes, God is the first cause; and therefore receives nothing from any prior cause.

THIS primary attribute of the Deity, we, because of our weakness, commonly take up by a negative idea, that God, being the first cause, depends on no other cause; yet it is in itself a most glorious, essential, and positive perfection of God, by some called *Aseity*, denoting his most perfect sufficiency to exist of, and from himself; so that, from himself (in a negative, not positive meaning) he exists, in a way most

† State, page 40.

remote from all causuality, and in a manner infinitely more glorious than all other beings, who derive their being and existence from their causes. This perfection has been demonstrated, by these that write best on natural religion, to be an essential and primary attribute of God; which therefore belongeth to the † Son, who, according to the whole strain of divine revelation, is the one true God.

Mr Simpson appeals to Bishop Pearson and Bishop Bull their sentiments as to the personal properties. But whatever these learned authors have advanced on this subject, we must be convinced, that they differ widely from him upon this very head: however, sometimes they seem to reason against the *Auto-theists*. For Bishop Bull, as he maintains the eternal necessary generation of the Son, and that both as his own judgment, and that of the primitive fathers; so likewise he asserts the Son's consubstantiality, and his equality to the Father, as to nature and essence ‡. And so doth Bishop Pearson, who saith expresly ‖, "He "(the Father) hath begotten a Son of the same na-"ture and essence with himself, not only specifically, "but individually". And elsewhere he proves, from John i. 1. That "the Word is the same supreme, e-"ternal, independent § God with the Father." We may be satisfactorily and fully convinced of the distinction between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, without pretending to assign, or so much as to be able

† Filius Dei a se est, hoc est, vivit per suam omni-sufficientiam. *Vitring.* Vid. etiam *Gamar.*

‡ *Bull* Imp. points of Prim. Christ. vol. 3. page 984. and 928.

‖ Bishop Pearson on the Creed, page 33.

§ Ibid. page 120.

te conceive the particular grounds of that distinction. These are not unfolded to us in scripture, and therefore some late writers have taken abundantly too much upon them, who tell us they will unravel this great mystery *; but, after all, have left it as much in the dark as ever. However, we may be assured, that independence, an essential perfection of the Deity, can be no distinguishing character of the divine persons from one another, who are the same one true God; and that the whole divine nature is in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and in each of them considered distinctly.

The personal properties of Father and Son, revealed to us in scripture, are, that he begets the Son, and the Son is begotten of the Father. But since the scriptures, in the strongest terms, assert, that the Son is as truly, and in all respects as much our one God as the Father himself, and not inferior to him, as God; we must believe, that the same independent substance or essence subsists in the unbegotten Father † and begotten Son. It is most absurd, which some have advanced ‡, that if the persons of the adorable Trinity are not proper persons, in the sense and definition of the term *person* among men, then they are not persons at all, or not persons properly, but metaphorically: as if any would say, that the infinite Being is not properly a being, unless the proper definition of a finite being agree to him.

* Scrip. *Trin.* explained.

† Christus ad se Deus dicitur, ad Patrem Filius dicitur: Rursusque Pater ad se Deus dicitur, ad Filium Pater,—quod dicitur ad se Pater, et Filius ad se, est idem Deus. Ergo quum de Filio sine Patris respectu simpliciter loquimur, bene et proprie, ipsum a se esse asserimus.—Aug. *Lib.* 5. *de Trini.*

‡ Mr Watts on the *Trini.*

We maintain, that the persons of the blessed Trinity are truly distinct, in opposition to Sabellianism; and that they are proper persons, subsisting in the same undivided substance or essence: that the generation is a proper generation: the procession of the Holy Spirit a proper procession; such as doth properly, and did eternally and necessarily take place among the glorious persons subsisting in the Godhead. But we deny that they are proper persons in the sense that men and angels are proper persons, who are distinct substances, and have distinct understandings and wills. The persons of the Trinity are not so distinct as to be independent of, separate from, and alien to each other. They are distinct proper persons, though no man, nor perhaps angel, can define what a divine person is, or account for the distinction among themselves. The like may be said of the generation of the Son, which is, no doubt, most proper, though not to be defined by the notion of generation among men: "For who can declare his generation." And therefore the generation of the Son will still remain a mystery, let bold men quibble as they will. There is no great force in that argument Dr Clark * advances for the Father's proper supremacy, *viz.* "That "he that begat, must needs (for that reason, and "upon that very account) be greater than he that is "begotten of him." However, in the text adduced there by the Dr, it deserves to be observed, that our Lord is not there speaking of his generation, but his mission, which may well take place betwixt two equal persons; nor does he drop any thing that intimates any particular reference to his Father's begetting him; but directly refers to his own acting, by his commission as Mediator, which is the respect in

* Scrip. Doct. No. 830.

which his Father is greater. Among men, in the very name of father, there is implied something greater than in that of son. But it does not follow, that it must needs be so in the Deity, where the Son no more had any beginning of being than the Father; nor could in any instant not have been, any more than the Father himself could not have been. A parallel between father and son amongst men, and Father and Son in the Deity, cannot, with any shew of reason, be drawn; the difference being so wide between them, as might be shewn in many particulars. Among men, father and son are two, not only divided persons, but they have different endowments: in the Deity, Father and Son are one; not one person, but one in all excellencies and perfections. Amongst men, the father has his things, and the son his things; but in the Deity, the Son hath all things, without exception, that the Father hath. Among men, the son doth some things, and the father other things; but in the Deity, whatever things the Father doth, these doth the Son likewise. Amongst men, though the son is from the father, yet he is not in the father; and though the father produced the son, yet he is not in the son; and though a son may be like the father, yet it cannot, speaking strictly, be said, that he that has seen the son has seen the father. But, in the Deity, the Father is so in the Son, and the Son in the Father, that he that has seen the Son, has also seen the Father.

The learned Dr Calamy * has made it appear, that that phrase, "The Father is the fountain of the "Deity," as it is not a scriptural expression, so it is not a proper speech, nor strictly justifiable; and that

* Dr Calamy's Serm. page 22.

it seems to have been first brought in by the spurious Denis the Areopagite. I could advance a concurring testimony of judicious divines on this head.

The same excellent author owns himself backward to give in to a proper supremacy of the Father, for fear of laying a foundation for an inference of the inferiority of the Son *.

That text, John v. "As the Father hath life in "himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in "himself;" has been adduced, to prove a proper communication of substance from Father to Son. Calvin and others have answered, That this text is to be understood of our Lord Jesus, as Mediator. But we shall not refuse eagerly a communication of substance in the sense above explained, of a proper divine *generation*. If all that is meant by it be, that the Father and Son are so truly distinguished by some eternal necessary relation to one another, that the one cannot be the other, though the *modus* of that relation, that founds the true distinction, is not revealed, nor can be comprehended, and therefore ought not to be defined by us; we refuse it to be a proper communication, in the sense that father communicates substance to son among men. The communication here must be of the same numerical substance. The life given here, is to have life in himself; and to have life in himself, even as the Father hath life in himself, is therefore to have an independent life and nature: which independent life and nature (if this place be rightly understood of the *generation* of the Son, which is eternal) was communicated to the Son from all eternity; the Fa-

* Dr Calamy's Serm. page 26.

ther was * always Father; he is as necessarily a Father as he is God. The character of *Father* being necessary, and not depending upon his will, so that the Son never began to be, but is, and always was, the independent God: and he that is, and, from eternity, always was, the independent God, is truly self-existent and independent, and received being and Godhead from no other being whatsoever. As it is an eternal relative perfection in the Father to beget the Son, so it is an eternal relative perfection in the Son to be begotten of the Father. And no man can prove the one perfection greater than the other, unless he can work out a demonstration without ideas †. The fallacy lies in conceiving the glorious persons of the blessed Trinity, and the eternal generation ‡, after the manner of human persons, and of an human generation, and that without any foundation in scripture, or solid argument from reason. Though the generation of the Son is revealed in scripture, yet it is no where said, that it is to be explained by that among

* Semper enim in Patre, ne Pater non semper sit Pater. Novat. de Trin. cap. 31. Πατηρ αει Πατηρ, και ουκ ην καιρος εν ω ουκ ην ο Πατηρ Πατηρ. Epiph. Hæres. 62. Vide Cyril. dial. de Trinit. 2.

† Μη——Ne de *generatione* Dei disputes: Neque enim illud tutum est. Si enim tuam cognoscis non protinus sequitur, Dei quoque *generationem* tibi cognitam esse. Si autem tua tibi ignota est, quo tandem modo Dei generatio tibi nota erit? quanto enim difficilius est, Dei naturam, quam hominis investigare, tanto etiam difficilius percipi potest superna et divina generatio quam tua. Nazianz. orat. 25.

‡ Irenæus, and most of the ancient writers after him, represent the "Son's generation as a thing that is not to be explained, and which no one knows, neither angels, nor archangels, "nor principalities, nor powers, but only the Father that begat, "and the Son that is begotten." Iren. adv. Hær. l. 2. cap. 48. *Vocatur generatio, non ut passionem aliquam adumbrent, sed ut essentiæ identitatem statuant.* Isid. Pelus. epist. 141.

men; but quite otherwise, as might be shown. And the scriptures no where assert a proper supremacy of the Father above the Son, except what is merely œconomical. As for *reason*, I know little it hath to say here; having got a bruise in the fall, it is weak, even in its own sphere. With how much toil doth it creep from letters to words, and from words to arts and sciences? and when it is there, how little doth it know? Can it draw out an occult quality to open view, or unriddle a loadstone? Nay, in a common stone, can it dive into the form and nature of it? Can it strip the meanest creature of the investing accidents, and look upon the pure naked essence thereof? And shall such a weakling as this, dunced in every atom within its own sphere, usurp the crown, and rule over sacred mysteries, which come out of the bosom of God, by divine revelation, to be the wonder of angels, and the object of the faith of men; and are, in a transcendent excess, infinitely above the capacity of both of them? The Father's personal property is only known by revelation, and is one of these sacred mysteries, to be adored and believed, and not audaciously searched into. And we must be pardoned to say, that it is a thing very unintelligible, how the scripture notion of the Father's personal property, *unbegotten*, and begetting the Son, can, in any sense whatsoever, so include that natural and self-evident attribute of the Deity, independence or self-existence, as, in that sense, not to be affirmed of the Son.

According to our Confession, chap. ii. § 2. "God," essentially considered, "is the alone foun-"tain of all being." And the Son, with the Holy Ghost, as well as the Father, according to § 3. being God, essentially considered, is therefore here as-

ferred, according to the scripture, to be the fountain of all being; and therefore an independent and underived being, having being and Godhead from no other being whatsoever. The underived self-existent essence and being is one and the same numerically in the three Divine Persons.

To make the being and Godhead of the Son derived and dependent, is to make him another god, an inferior god to the Father, and consequently no god, but an excellent creature. These who deny the numerical oneness of substance or essence, they class the glorious eternal Son of God among the rank of dependent, and therefore contingent beings. It is absurd and contradictory to suppose two or more independent beings or substances: and it is demonstrable, that a dependent being or substance cannot be the one true God. And upon this we shall found our first argument from the holy scriptures, to prove, that the Son is an independent being or substance as well as the Father.

I. It appears, from a variety of texts in the scripture, (which can only give us light in this awful and mysterious subject), that the Son is as truly and really God as the Father himself. It has been proved, and shall be further illustrated in the sequel, that the Son, in all respects, is as much our one God as the Father himself; and since he is the one God, he is therefore independent, because the one God is necessarily such. For (as the learned Bishop Pearson says) "The first and common notion of a Divinity consists "in these particulars: that it is a being of itself, and "independent from any other: that it is that upon "which all things that are made depend; and that it

"governs all things *." Some endeavour to load the defenders of the numerical oneneſs with the calumny of *Sabellianiſm*. It may be lodged more juſtly with the impugners of our Lord's ſupreme Deity. It is, no doubt, Sabellianiſm, to ſay, that there is but one perſon who is the ſupreme God, *i. e.* truly God; or to ſuppoſe the Godhead to be one ſingle *hypoſtaſis*. It is blaſphemy to ſay, that the Son is not truly God; and an abſurd contradiction to ſay, that he is truly God, and yet not independent, *i. e.* a dependent god, that is, a god, and no god.

II. Our one God, the Father, never was any other than a Father. He was not firſt God, and afterwards a Father; but, without any beginning of being, always was both God and Father †. He is as neceſſarily Father as he is God: the character of *Father* depending upon his Godhead, and not merely upon his will. If he had not ever been a Father, there muſt have been an inſtant when he was without a Son; and then it could not have been ſaid by the apoſtle, that the *Word* that was *God* was "in the "beginning," *i. e.* from eternity, "with God." And ſince our one God the Father always was a *Father*, it follows, by a neceſſary conſequence, that he always had a Son; and that that Son of his had no beginning of being, and could not but be and exiſt neceſſarily; and that it can, with no more truth, be ſaid of him, that "there was a time when he was "not," than it can of the Father himſelf. And ſince the Son had no beginning of being, he received being and Godhead from no *prior* being; and ſince

* Biſhop Pearſon's expoſition of the Creed, page 18.

† Alex. biſhop of Alexandria reckons it among the ſingularities of Arius, that he would not own the Father to have been always a Father. *Alex. epiſt.*

he received being from no *prior* being, it must be acknowledged, that he is independent and self-existent. The Son had no beginning of being, and is therefore a *beginningless* Being.

It is plain, that God, being alway Father, and Christ being the only-begotten of the Father, he must partake of the substance † of the Father; and if he partake of the substance of the Father, he must be one with the Father; because the divine substance is but one, as being infinite and indivisible; and therefore cannot be separated or multiplied. And since the whole divine essence is from all eternity, and independent, and the generation of the Son is absolutely eternal ‡; therefore our blessed Saviour, by partaking of this divine essence, must, for that reason, be eternal and independent.

No less a man than Dr Waterland, who, with great learning and skill in the writings of the ancients, has defended the proper Deity of our blessed Saviour with great applause; blames Dr Clark for taking advantage of that equivocal word ἀγέννητος, which he renders commonly self-existent, which cannot serve his cause, since it may well be translated,

† That the Son is of the same substance with the Father. See it proven, Pearson on the Creed, page 107. and Bull, D. F. N.

‡ Quod ante tempus natum est, semper est natum; quia id quod est ante æternum tempus, hoc semper est. Quod autem semper est natum, non admittit, ne aliquando non fuerit; quia aliquando non fuisse, jam non est semper esse. *Hilar. de Trin.* page 1127. *Origen*, Com. in *Jo.* page 31. commenting on these words, *This day I have begotten thee*, proceeds thus,—— Λεγεται.—— "They are spoken to him by God, with whom it "is always *to-day*; for I conceive there is no evening nor "morning with him; but the time so extended, if I may so "speak, with his unbegotten and eternal life, is the *to-day*, in

Unbegotten *. For, as that learned author observes elsewhere, the word ἀγεννητος and ἀγενητος, with double or single *n*, have been used very promiscuously in authors; and hardly came to be accurately distinguished, till the Arian controversy gave occasion for it †. It is plain, that some of the ancients, (as Cyril, and others) by ἀγενητες, understood *Unbegotten* ‡; and that, when by ἀγενητες, they meant a Being uncreated, immutable, eternal, and independent, they ascribed this term to the Son, as well as the Father. So Ignatius, so Irenæus, so Origen, expressly stiles him ‖. Dr Waterland shews, by solid arguments, that Irenæus affirmed the three persons to be the one ἀγεννητος Θεος, or eternal God §.

III. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the fountain of all being, who gave being to every other being beside himself, and upon whom all things that are made do depend: which is manifest from the holy scriptures, which ascribe the creation of all things unto him, as the principal efficient cause; which shall be further

" which the *Son* is begotten; there being no beginning found " of his generation, any more than of the *to-day*."

* Dr Water. 1st defence, page 371.

† Ibid. page 153. Vide *Suicer. Thesaur.* and *Cudworth*, for profane writers, page 253.; and *Montf.* Admon. in *Athan.* de Cret. *Athan.* Syn. N. page 207. *Cit. ibid.*

‡ Ουτε δυο αγέννητοι, ουτε δυο μονογενεις, αλλ' εις εστι Πατηρ αγεννητος (αγεννητος γαρ εστιν ὁ Πατερα μη εχων) και εις εστι Υιος, αϊδιως εκ Πατρος γεγεννημενος. Cyril. (Cit. a Wat.) Catech. 10. page 141. Ox.

‖ Dr Wat. ibid. page 258. 438. 439. where he says, That Origen expressly makes him (the Son αγεννητος, uncreated, immutable, &c. and cites his book against Celsus, page 287. 169. 170. and affirms it to be a known principle of Irenæus, his asserting the Son to be αγεννητος, and cites Iren. lib. 2. cap. 36. page 163.

§ Dr Wat. page 438.

illustrated in the sequel. He is therefore the first cause, and derives his being from no prior cause; because it is a gross absurdity to suppose a cause before the first cause.

IV. It must be owned by all, that he who is the "first and last, and besides whom there is no God," Is. xliv. 6. is truly independent and self-existent; because, by these very characters, the only true God distinguisheth himself from all false gods that have not a divine nature.

When we observe that our Lord Jesus Christ doth assume these titles to himself absolutely, without any restriction or limitation, we must conclude, that he is the only true God, independent and self-existent. He proclaimed himself by a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the "first and the last," Rev. i. 11. He upholdeth the church of Smyrna in her tribulation, by virtue of the same description. "These things saith the first "and the last, which was dead, and is alive," Rev. ii. 8. He ascertaineth his coming to judgment with the same assertion, "I am Alpha and Omega, the begin- "ning and the end, the first and the last," Rev. xxii. 13.

He saith likewise of himself, "Look unto me, "and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: For I "am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by "myself, that unto me every knee shall bow, every "tongue shall swear," Is. xlv. 22. 23. Here the Son sets himself forth as the object of the faith of sinful men; as the object of their worship and adoration. He swears by himself, because he could swear by none greater. He asserts himself to be God;

"beside whom there is none else," Rev. xxii. 13. Is. xliv. 6. All which, together with his being the † first and the last, sufficiently demonstrate, "That beside "him there is no god; and that before him there "was no god formed, neither shall there be after "him," Is. xliii. 10. Wherefore, he received being and Godhead from no prior being, and therefore must be owned to be independent ‡ and self-existent.

V. OUR Lord Jesus Christ is called JEHOVAH in many different places of scripture. He is the "right-"teous Branch raised unto David; the King that "shall reign and prosper, in whose days Judah shall "be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely," Jer. xxiii. 5. 6. We are assured, that "this is the name whereby "he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness ‖."

† Rev. xxii. 13. Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω, ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος. ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, with the article elsewhere, so much stood upon. It has been a bold and ill-founded criticism of Socinus, and others, that the most fundamental doctrine, maintained as such, ever since the apostles time, by the Catholic church, must be examined and censured by ὁ, ἡ, τὸ. Articles that Greeks promiscuously use or omit.

‡ To talk of one that is eternal God, deriving from another, is to throw out a vile contradiction, and deriving deity; or that he, that gives existence to all other things, should not be self-existent. Bradbury's serm. v. 2. page 758.

‖ Jer. xxiii. 5. 6. The Jews attribute the name JEHOVAH to the Messias, from this very text, as in the Sephor Ikkar, lib. 2. cap. 8. The translation runs thus: "The scripture call-"eth the name of the Messia, JEHOVAH *our righteousness.*" And in Midrasch Tisim on Psal. xxi. "God calleth the Mes-"sias by his own name; and his name is JEHOVAH. It is "written of the Messias, Jer. xxiii. 6. This is the name which "they shall call him, JEHOVAH our righteousness." Thus also Echa Rabbati, Lam. i. 6.

The best interpretation of the words, Jer. xxxiii. 16. is, *Iste qui vocabit eam*, that is, Christ. As for Socinus his cavils, they have been frequently and fully refuted.

The *Lord*, that is, JEHOVAH. The expreſſion of his ſupremacy and independent nature, and the addition of "our righteouſneſs," can be no diminution to his Majeſty.

IF theſe words in the prophet, "Sing and rejoice, "O daughter of Zion: for lo, I come, and will "dwell in the midſt of thee, ſaith the Lord," (JEHOVAH), did not ſufficiently, of themſelves, denote our Saviour, who dwelt among us, as certainly they do; yet the words that follow would evince as much: "And many nations ſhall be joined to the Lord in "that day, and ſhall be my people; and I will "dwell in the midſt of thee; and thou ſhalt know "that the Lord of hoſts hath ſent me unto thee," Zech. ii. 10. 11. For what other lord can we conceive dwelling in the midſt of us, and ſent unto us by the Lord of hoſts, but Chriſt? It was no other than JEHOVAH that ſpake theſe words, "I will "have mercy upon the houſe of Judah, and will ſave "them by the Lord" (JEHOVAH) "their God." As in another place he ſpeaketh, "I will ſtrengthen "them in the Lord," (JEHOVAH), "and they ſhall "walk up and down in his name, ſaith the Lord," (JEHOVAH), where he who ſtrengtheneth is one, and he by whom he ſtrengtheneth is another, clearly diſtinguiſhed from him, by the perſonal pronoun; each of them is JEHOVAH, and yet JEHOVAH our God is one JEHOVAH, Zech. x. 12. comp. alſo Zech. xii. 10. John xix. 34. 36. Iſ. xl. 3. Mat. iii. 3. Deut. vi. 4.

JEHOVAH is the incommunicable name of the one true God; a name ſo peculiar to him, "that he, "whoſe name alone is JEHOVAH, is the Moſt High over "all the earth," Pſal. lxxxiii. 18.: it is his "me-"morial to all generations," Hoſ. xii. 5. A name ſo incommunicably appropriate to himſelf, that "he

"will not give it, nor the glory and perfection signified by it, to another *," Is. xlii. 8. Seeing he is the only I AM, ὁ ὤν, Exod. iii. 15. without casuality, without time, without beginning, without end †; it must be owned, that the name he assumed to himself distinguished him from every other being, and particularly from the idol-gods of the nations. The sun, one of their gods ‡ they worshipped, had no doubt a being, and existed; but the one true God is here characterised, that he is the ὁ ὤν, *i. e.* being itself independent and self-existent.

THE primary signification of JEHOVAH is *Being*, as all know; and the most obvious reason of the name is, that God is Being itself, independent ‖, necessarily existing, and immutable. According to that of the prophet, "I am JEHOVAH; I change not," Mal. iii. 6.; and that spoken by the Lord himself to Moses,

* See this proved in the second letter to the author of the history of Mont. page 5. vide Mark in Hos. xii. 5. Calvin in Psal. lxxxiii. 18. and Lydek exercit. select.

† Manasse Ben. Israel, concil. ad Exod. iii. 15. Hæc habet verba; perinde est ac si dixisset, monstra illis, me esse, qui sum, i. e. meam essentiam a seipsa subsistere, nec ab alia dependere, ut cætera omnia quæ existunt, quia a me provenerunt, et ita sunt, ut potuerint, et adhuc possunt non esse: quod idem denotat tetragrammaton. Bernard. lib. 5 ad Eug. Deus est, quod est, i. e. suum ipsius, et omnium aliarum rerum esse, ipse sibi, ipse omnibus est, ac per hoc quodammodo solus est. Videtur Plato Mosis dicta suffuratus; Deum sæpius appellavit το ὄν, το αὐτο ον.

‡ Est enim sol, Ægyptiorum Osiris, &c. Vide Vossium.

‖ Esse dicitur Deus, quia per se est, semper est, semper vivit, semper idem est.——Drusii Tetragram c. 24. Walter. Spicileg. Controvers. Nomen illud est nomen characteristicum, quo Deus se secerni voluit a reliquis Diis, Camero. Prælect. in Matth. xx. Aben. Ezra ad Psal. li. ait, JEHOVAH notari Dei æternitatem atque immutabilitatem. Nomen hoc unum, ex omnibus Dei, maxime proprium habendum. Fuller miscel. lib. 4. cap. 13.

"I AM that I AM," Exod. iii. 14. In him is the whole nature of entity; and nothing hath any absolute perfect being but God. And it is a word of absolute signification †, expressing the eternity and independence of the one true God; which might be proved at great length, both from scripture, and the authorities of the best critics in this case.

FROM all which, our Lord Jesus Christ may, by an easy and necessary deduction, be clearly proved to be the independent being and substance; as he is often, in the Old Testament, stiled JEHOVAH, the proper, peculiar, and incommunicable name of the one true God, importing necessary existence and absolute independent Being, the Fountain and Foundation of all that is, or can be. He, I say, who has this name and peculiar character frequently and expressly ascribed to him, must have in himself the glorious perfections signified by it; that is, he must be owned to be eternal, necessarily existent, and independent †. Bishop Pearson on the Creed, page 156. 158. expresseth himself thus: "I do assent unto this as a certain "and infallible truth, taught me by God himself, "that Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, is the true "JEHOVAH, who hath that being which is originally

* *Nomen* מהי *uti derivatur ab* היה *fuit, ita in nativa significatione denotat aliquid quod est absolutissime ex seipso.* Vide Leusd. Philog. Hæb. Dissert. 27. The word JEHOVAH is sometimes rendered by Θεος, so that the word Θεος is not a relative word. Some have made use of a quibble, that Θεος is a relative word, because we may say, my God, not my infinite substance. Besides other things, we say, JEHOVAH is attributed to Christ, a word of absolute signification. We cannot properly say, my JEHOVAH, the JEHOVAH of Israel. *Quoad textum cap. 3. In nomine meo* JEHOVAH *non sum iis notus factus. Animadvertit Gataker textum legendum esse interrogative.* Vide Gatak. miscel. page 598.

† Vide Durham on Rev. chap. i. 4. 8.

" and eternally of itself, and on which all other be-
" ings do essentially depend; that, by the right of
" emanation of all things from him, he hath an ab-
" solute, supreme, and universal dominion over all
" things, as God." Dr Owen affirms, that " ὁ ὤν,
" αυτος, are all the same name of God, expressing his
" eternal and immutable self-existence; and in that
" place applies these names to the Son †."

CHAP. V.

Our Lord JESUS CHRIST *necessarily existent, or a necessary Being.*

THE independence of our blessed Saviour has been proved and asserted; from whence it follows, that he is a necessary Being. The Venerable Assembly have found these propositions relevant, and proven against Mr Simpson, *viz.* " That, in teaching
" his students, he denied the necessary existence of our
" Lord Jesus Christ;" and taught, " That the ne-
" cessary existence of our Lord Jesus Christ was a
" thing we know not:" and that " the term *necessary*
" *existence* was impertinent, and not to be used in
" talking of the Trinity ‡."

IT is not to my present purpose to observe what expressions under his own hand occur in the process, which corroborate what the witnesses depone against him on this article. Only it may be remarked, that he has not been able to advance one sound author, who takes *necessary existence* to signify the *Father's personal property*. This is one main principle that Dr Clark endeavours to establish, and that Dr Waterland sets himself to oppose, that *necessary existence* is so peculiarly to be appropriated to the Father, as

† Dr Owen's exposition of the Hebrews, vol. 1. page 124.
‡ Vide Precced. Aff. 1727. 1728. in the State.

not to be applied to the Son. And the necessary generation of the Son has been maintained by Bishop Bull *, and others.

Our Confession, chap. 8. § 2. asserts, "That the "Son is very and eternal God:" and chap. 2. § 1. "The true God is infinite in being and perfection, "immutable,"——Infiniteness in being and perfection, and *immutability*, infer *necessary existence*; and therefore, since Christ is very God, he must, according to the Confession, be *necessarily existent*: which doctrine is sufficiently confirmed from the holy scriptures.

I. "All things whatsoever the Father hath are "his †," John xvi. 15.; and therefore all the perfections that the Father hath belong to him. And though some would willingly except independency, and necessary existence; yet if they belong to the Deity, as such, as certainly they do, it follows, by a necessary consequence, that they also must belong to the Son, as well as the Father, because he is truly God; and, in reality, an inferior and dependent god is no god at all. A contingent and precarious being cannot be the infinitely perfect Being; and can be no more than an excellent creature. As to be and exist is a greater perfection than not to be, and not to exist; so, to exist *necessarily*, is a greater perfection ‡ than to exist *contingently*: therefore the

* Imp. points of prim. Christ. v. 3. page 984. 928.

† Quod unus possidet singulorum est, Domino ipso dicente, omnia quæcunque habet Pater, mea sunt. Zen. Veron. cit. a Bull, c. 7. page 366.

‡ The infinite perfection of a being or nature consisteth in this, that it be absolutely and essentially necessary. Pearson on the Creed, page 18.

Son, to whom, as the only true God, all possible perfections are to be ascribed, exists *necessarily*. The Son, as we saw, is JEHOVAH, as well as the Father, and must therefore exist necessarily and independently, as well as the Father; since the name JEHOVAH intimates one that has independent and *necessary existence*. So that when Dr Clark says, that all divine powers are communicated to the Son, except absolute supremacy and independency, he makes an exception, in which he has neither scripture nor reason accompanying him. He has not the scripture with him; because that tells us, that the Son hath whatsoever the Father hath. Nor has he reason to support him; because, whosoever is truly and properly God, must have every thing that is essential to the Deity belonging to him. Now, it appears from the whole current of scripture, that the Son of God has every thing attributed to him that can tend to raise our ideas of his dignity, and to denote a person strictly and essentially divine. He has all that the Father has, except his being a Father.

II. THE creation of all things is a distinguishing character by which the true God was to be known; and, on the account of which, he claims to himself all homage, worship, and adoration; and is the distinctive character of the Deity from all false gods, Psal. xcvi. 4. 5. Is. xliv. 24. Zech. xii. 1.

Now we are assured as to the Son, John i. 3. "That all things were made by him; and that without him was not any thing made that was made †."

† Dr Water. says, "The preposition Δια, with a Genitive after "it, is frequently used, as well in scripture as ecclesiastical "writers, to express the efficient cause, as much as ὑπο τα, "or κρος, or any other. (Vide Rom. xi. 36 . And concludes,

And elsewhere the apostle Paul declares, Heb. i. 8. 10. 11. 12. "That the Son, by whom, in these last "days, God spake unto us, is he by whom also he "made the worlds." So that, as through faith, we understand that "the worlds were framed by the "word of God;" so must we also believe, that they were made by the Son of God: which the apostle doth not only, in the entrance of his epistle, deliver, but, in the sequel, prove: for, shewing that greater things have been spoken of him than ever were attributed to any of the angels, the most glorious of all the creatures of God; amongst the rest, he saith, The scripture spake unto the Son, "Thy throne, "O God, is for ever and ever." And not only so, but also, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid "the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are "the work of thine hands," *&c.* †. These words were spoken to the Son of God, as the apostle himself declares; and it appears out of the order and the series of the chapter: the design of which is to declare the super-eminent excellency of our Saviour Christ; nay, the conjunction *and*, refers this place of the Psalmist plainly to the former; of which he said expressly, "But unto the Son he saith." As sure then as, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and e-"ver," was said unto the Son; so certain it is, "Thou, "Lord, hast laid the foundation of the earth," was said unto the same ‡. Nor is it possible to avoid the

"That the argument, drawn from the proposition, is poor "and trifling; as was long since observed by Basil the great, "who exposes its author Aetius. vide Basil. de Spir. Sanct. "page 145. cit a Wet."

† See Dr Water. reasons for understanding this text of Christ, Def. quer page 95. And Mr Johnson's third sermon on the Son's dominion.

‡ Πρὸς αὐτοῦ γαρ καὶ δι αὐτοῦ παντα γεγενετο, ἐνὸς ὄντος τοῦ Πατρος καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ. Athenag. page 38.

apostle's connection, by attributing the destruction of the heavens out of the last words to the Son, "As "a vesture thou shalt fold them up; and they shall "be changed;" and denying the creation of them, out of the first, to the same. For it is most evident, that there is but one † person spoken to; and that the destruction and creation of the heavens are both attributed to the same: it is therefore an undeniable truth, grounded upon the profession of the Psalmist, and the interpretation of the apostle, that the Son of God created the world.

FARTHER, the same apostle saith elsewhere of the Son, Col. i. 16. 17. "By him were all things cre-"ated that are in heaven and that are in earth, vi-"sible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or do-"minions, or principalities, or powers: all things were "created by him, and for him: and he is before all things; "and by him all things consist," Col. i. 16. 17. Here the apostle asserteth, in the vulgar phrase of Moses, "By him were all things created that are in heaven, "and that are in earth;" signifying thereby, that he speaketh of the same creation. Farther, by a division, which Moses never used, as describing the production only of corporeal substances; lest therefore those immaterial beings might seem exempted from the Son's creation, he addeth, *visible* and *invisible*; and lest, in that invisible world, among the many degrees that possibly may be in the celestial hierarchy, any order might seem exempted from an essential de-

† The exception of Socinus, that there is a comma wanting after ἃ in the Greek, is of no weight. It is evident there are distinctions in the Greek copies after that conjunction. No argument can be drawn from a few ancient copies, which all know were abundantly careless of distinctions. In the Syriac transl. *rursum* is added, vide Owen *in locum*.

pendence upon him, he nameth those which are of greatest eminence, "whether they be thrones, or do-"minions," &c. Nor doth it yet suffice thus to extend the object of his power, by asserting all things to be made by him, except it be so understood, as to acknowledge the sovereignty of his person, and the authority of his action: for, lest we should conceive the Son of God framing the world, as an instrumental cause †, which worketh by and for another, he sheweth him as well the final as the efficient cause; for "all things were created by him, and for him." And whereas all things first received their being by creation, and when they have received it, continue in the same, by virtue of God's conservation, "in whom "we live, and move, and have our being;" lest, in any thing, we should be thought not to depend immediately upon the Son of God, he is described as the Conserver, as well as the Creator; for "he is "before all things, and by him all things consist." Here we have so complete a description of the Creator of the world, applied to the Son, that the Father is no where more plainly or fully set forth unto us, as the Maker of the same. This text cannot possibly be understood of a new creation; seeing not only wicked men, but the angels, whether good or bad, that are said to have been created by the Son, are no constituent parts of the new creation.

These who deny our Lord Jesus Christ to be a *necessary Being*, do consequentially assert, that the Creator of the world, who gave being to all things, is himself no more than a contingent Being: that he, upon whom all things do therefore depend, is him-

† *De Vries*, in his *Exercit. de Deo Creante*, shews the folly and absurdity of making a creature, how excellent soever, so much as an instrumental cause in creation.

self dependent: that he who gave every being existence, has himself a precarious existence, finite and limited powers. All which is to assert the most absurd contradictions.

CREATION is appropriated, in scripture, to the one self-existent God. "I am JEHOVAH, that maketh all "things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that "spreadeth abroad the earth by myself," Is. xliv. 24. Neh. ix. 6. It is a work peculiar to God; and, by this, the God of Israel is distinguished from all false gods. The apostle Paul represents the order and frame of the visible world, as an evident demonstration of the power and Godhead of him that created it: so is it, by consequence, as evident a demonstration, that none could create it but the eternal God. To talk of a creature endued with a power of creating, is a direct confounding the creature and the Creator. It has long ago been demonstrated, by such as have treated this argument, that this work can be effected by no power less than infinite. And to suppose a finite being endued with infinite powers, is to imagine the most absurd contradiction. In scripture, it is every-where spoken of as a divine act. Not so much as a grain of sand, said to be created by an angel or archangel *. And reasonable it is to suppose, that nothing can come into being by any power less than his, who is the Fountain of all being. Yea, it is impossible, in the nature of the thing, that a derived dependent being should create and give being to any thing, far less to all things.

* Nihil in totum diabolus invenitur fecisse, videlicet cum ipse creatura sit Dei, quemadmodum et reliqui angeli, Iren. pag. 228. Vide Bull, D. F. pag. 291. Οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ ἄγγελοι δημιουργεῖν δύνανται, κτίσματα ὄντες καὶ αὐτοί. Athan. orat. 2. pag. 489.

From what has been advanced, it is very manifest, that to give being to all things, is the peculiar and distinguishing character of the one true God, who is himself a necessary Being; and that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator of the universe, of men, of angels, and of all things †: he is therefore the Fountain of all being, the first Cause and Origin of all things: he is therefore self-existent; and, if self-existent, then *necessarily existent*. Since contingent beings do depend upon the power and will of the first Cause for their being, the first Cause being independent, is therefore a necessary Being. It is impossible, that he that is the first Cause should not have been; or else it is impossible he should ever have been; and impossible that any thing should have ever existed. Nothing more plain, than that our Lord Jesus is the Fountain of all being, and therefore a *necessary Being*.

III. Our Lord Jesus Christ is simply and absolutely eternal; and therefore a *necessary Being*. It must be owned there is no occasion for putting the epithets of *simple*, or *absolute*, to the word *eternal*, which every one understands better without it; it being absurd to suppose an unlimited and a limited eternity; which is, in reality, an eternity, and no eternity; were it not that some have invented and made use of these imaginary distinctions; which therefore must be obviated.

† Αγγελων δημιυργὸς, Tatian. pag. 22. 26. Παντα ὁ λογος ποιει, τα ολα δημιυργει—Clem. Alex. pag. 310. Δημῖυργον τῶν παν ἀν—Origen apud Huet. pag. 38. Ο δημιυργος λογος, Ο ποιητης ἀν ὁλῶν, Euseb. in Psalm. pag. 125. The ancients understanding, Gen. i. 26. of a Trinity of Persons, maketh it evident, they thought the Son, as well as the Father, the Creator of the world.

The absolute eternity of our Lord Jesus Christ is inculcated, with that frequency and solemnity, throughout the holy scriptures, that he who runs may read it. This truth is revealed and confirmed, Prov. viii. 22. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning "of his way.*, before his works of old. I was set "up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever "the earth was †. When he prepared the heavens, "I was there.—When he appointed the foundation "of the earth, then was I by him, as one brought up "with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing "always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts "of the earth: and my delights were with the sons of "men." It is *Wisdom* that here speaks, and is spoken of. This we believe to be he who is the Wisdom of God, even his eternal Son. The Arians themselves granted, that it is the Son of God which is here spoken of; and that it is so, is most evident, from comparing this chapter with the first and ninth chapters of this sacred book. In the whole discourse, *Wisdom* speaks as a divine Person; assumes personal authority and power; maketh personal promises upon performance of duties due only to God himself. Divine actions, and personal properties, such as *eternity*, are ascribed to *Wisdom*. That our Lord Jesus is the divine Person spoken of, appears from this, that the things here spoken of, are elsewhere attributed to him, particularly in Phil. iii. 8. 15. Rev. xix. 16. 22. John i. 1. 2. 3. 23. 24. Col. i. 15. Rev. xxii. 1. 14. And, which is to the present purpose,

* Vulg. Latin read, *Possedit me.* So do Aquila and Theodotion. The Arians perverted this text, taking advantage of the corrupt translation of the LXX; but the corruption hath long since been confessed, the word signifies to possess by generation, Gen. iii. 1.

† Vide Owen, and Sanch. in loc.

his absolute eternity is here asserted; and that in as strong terms as the eternity of the Father's elsewhere expressed by. Not only is the Son said to be before the world, and all the works of creation, that is, from eternity, but also the original word, which we translate *from everlasting*, is the very same which we meet with in Psal. xc. 2.; where a parallel description of eternity is applied to the one God. In answer to the proclamation made of the name of GOD, Exod. xxxiv. 6. the prophet makes a declaration of the name of the Messiah, the Child promised; "his name "shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty "God, The everlasting Father," Is. ix. 6.; a name of the same import with that of the *Ancient of Days*.

To the same purpose it is said, "His goings forth "have been, of old, from everlasting *." These words are an express description of the person of the Messiah, who, though he was to be born, in the fulness of time, at Bethlehem, yet the existence of his divine nature "was from of old, from everlasting." The ancient Jews harmoniously agree, and the modern generally acknowledge, that it is the Messiah who is intended †: and the signal accomplishment of this prediction is recorded by the evangelists.

AGAIN, the eternity of the one true God is thus described, "I am the First, and I am the Last," Is. xliv. 6.—In like manner, the Son saith of himself, "I am the First, and I am the Last; I am Alpha "and Omega, the Beginning and the End," Rev.

* Ὁ ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, Θεὸς λόγος, καὶ τὰς ἐκεῖθεν, ἐξ-ὁδὸς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἔχων. Theodor. (hoc verbum) in principio apud Deum; et idcirco egressus ejus a diebus æternitatis, Hieron.

† Targum.

i. 17. and xxii. 13. And, "before Abraham was, "I am," not *I was:* even as it is not said of the eternity of the one God, Psal. xc. 2. "From ever-"lasting" *thou was*, but "thou art God."

A DESCRIPTION of absolute eternity is given by the Psalmist: "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure:" (or *stand*, as the word signifies): "but thou art the "same; and thy years shall have have no end," Psal. cii. 26, 27. Which is applied to our Lord Jesus by the apostle Paul, Heb. i.: where he attributes two things to our blessed Saviour; the creation of heaven and earth, and the abolition or change of them: and then proceeds to illustrate the eternity and immutability of their Creator. It is here said of Christ, that he *remaineth* or *abideth;* that he is *the same*, and *his years fail not*. One and the same thing is intended in all these expressions; even his eternal and absolutely-immutable existence. Eternity is not amiss called a *nunc stans* *; a present existence, wherein, or whereunto, nothing is past or future; it being always wholly present in and to itself. This is expressed in that διαμενεῖς, thou *standest, endurest, changest not*. The same is also expressed in the next words, ὁ αυτος εἶ, *thou art he*, or, *art the same*; or, as the Syriac hath it, *the same that thou art*. There is an allusion in these words unto, if not an expression of, that name of God, I AM; that is, "who is of him-"self, and in himself," always absolutely and unchangeably the same. The last expression, though metaphorical, is of the same importance, "Thy years

* Ad alteram nostræ descriptionis partem progredior, qua simultaneam esse æternitatis durationem diximus. Eam impugnare laborant Socini et Vorstii sectatores, qui dum nimie sibi plaudunt in quibusdam quas hic urgent argutiis, reipsa parum se subtiles probant. Vide hæc, &c. D'Vries exercit. de Dei æter.

"fail not." That is, the creatures, whose duration is reckoned by years, they do fail and come to an end; but of his being and existence, who is Creator, there is neither beginning nor end; because he is absolutely eternal.

As we find the Father described from his eternal being, without all beginning or ending, Rev. i. 4. so our Lord Jesus Christ asserteth his own absolute eternity, vers. 8. of the same chapter, in the very same terms. That the description there given is to be understood of Christ, is evident, from the precedent and following words to the text. And Dr Waterland has observed, that "nothing is more certain, "than that that very text," Rev. i. 8. "was under-"stood by the Ante-Nicene writers, in general, of "God the Son *." In like manner, it is said to him, by the whole heavenly host, "We give thee thanks, "O Lord, which art, and wast, and art to come," Rev. xi. 17.

Upon the whole, it is manifest, that the Son is absolutely *eternal* †; and because so, he cannot possi-

* Dr Waterland's defence, page 451.

† See, in the following words of Austin, the answer made by the Catholics to one principal argument of the Arians: "Interrogant Ariani, utrum Pater Filium *volens* an *nolens* genuerit; ut si responsum fuerit, quod volens genuerit, dicant, prior ergo est *voluntas* Patris; quod autem nolens genuerit quis potest dicere? vicissim quæsivit ab eo, utrum Deus Pater, volens an nolens sit Deus? ut si responderet, *nolens*, sequeretur illa miseria, quam de Deo credere, magna insania est; si autem diceret, *volens* responderetur ei, ergo et ipse Deus est sua *voluntate* non natura; quid ergo restabit, nisi ut obmutescerent." ——Augustin. contra Arian. lib. 1. pag. 626. tit. a Wat. Quod ante tempus natum est, semper est natum. Quia id quod est ante æternum tempus, hoc semper est; quod autem semper est natum, non ab

bly be a contingent being; which is as evident, as that, if he had been a contingent being, he could not have been absolutely eternal. An eternal being has no beginning of existence, nor change in duration; and is independent and self-existent. All which fully evince, that our Lord Jesus Christ, who is absolutely eternal, is therefore a *necessary Being* *.

CHAP. VI.

Our Lord JESUS CHRIST *the same in substance with the* FATHER.

THERE is a true and peculiar † unity in the Godhead; though that is of such a nature, as to be consistent with a Trinity. There is but one Godhead; and therefore there neither is nor can be more than one God. God would not have been an infinitely perfect Being, if he were not necessarily, or were not necessarily what he is. Now, let us but offer to suppose, that there are more gods than one, and there will be no possibility of giving any evidence as to each of them, that they are necessarily. And also, two infinite beings or substances there cannot be; because either the one of them would include the other, and so the included must needs be finite;

mittit *ne aliquando non fuerit*; quia aliquando non fuisse, jam non est semper esse. Hilar. de Trinit. pag. 1127. Sisinnius long ago observed, that the ancients never would attribute any beginning to the Son of God, believing him to have been co-eternal with the Father. Socrat. I. E. H. L. 5. chap. 10. cit. a Wat.

* Christ's necessary existence is maintained by Dr Waterland, Bishop Bull, Bishop Pearson, and all orthodox divines.

† Hic Deus unus est,—nec unus est specie, complectente plura individua:—sed ita unus est, ut nulla unitas similis isti in mundo reperiatur. Moses Maimonid. de funda. leg.

or it would not extend to the other, and so itself would not be infinite. If we look into the holy scripture, we shall find the *unity* of God loudly proclaimed, from one end to the other. "Ye are my witnesses, "saith the Lord: before me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after me. I am the First, "and I am Last; and besides me there is no god," Is. xliii. 10. and xliv. 6. 8. "Hear, O Israel, the "Lord our God is one Lord, (JEHOVAH)," Deut. iv. 6. The Jews were straitly charged to hear this, and let it be deeply impressed upon them. Our blessed Lord himself represents that unity of God, that is so strongly asserted in the book of Deuteronomy, to be the capital article of faith, and the worship that is thereupon due to God alone, to be "the first and "great commandment," Mark xii. 29. 30. And when the apostle Paul would represent the conversion of the Thessalonians, he says, "They turned to "God from idols, to serve the living and true God," 1 Thess. i. 9.

THE body of the Jews, however once prone to idolatry, have been immoveably fixed in the belief of God's unity; as is evident, from their thirteen articles of faith, composed by Maimonides: the second whereof is, The *unity of the blessed God.* And the wiser Pagans, though they knew not how to get clear of Polytheism, were yet very far from supposing several supreme independent deities. They commonly reckoned there was but one supreme God, and that the rest were but subordinate. But though this was the common sense of the Pagan world, yet there is not the least warrant from scripture to bring this Pagan scheme into Christianity, that, in effect, subverts the whole of revealed religion *.

* Ausi sunt Ariani et Macedoniani, Deum *magnum et po-*

The Venerable Assembly have found the fourth article of the libel, which is, "The Professor's teaching, as his own opinion, that the three persons of "the Trinity are not to be said to be numerically one "in substance or essence †;" both relevant and sufficiently proven.

To which I may add, what Mr Simpson himself saith elsewhere. "Perhaps some may think it a dis-"covery deserving much applause, if the presbytery "will shew in what place of scripture it is plainly re-"vealed, that the substance, in the three divine per-"sons, is one in number, and not three in number." No doubt Mr Simpson gives most credit to what the scriptures most plainly reveal; and since he seems to think, that the scripture more plainly reveals, that the substance, in the three persons, is *three* in number, than that it is *one* in number ‡; we must conclude, that he believes that the three persons are three substances. He says likewise, "I carefully avoid con-"founding one undivided essence with one substance "in number ‖." And he pretends to the authority of Zanchius, to countenance this his distinction betwixt essence and substance. But it is very plain, that Zanchius (*Lib.* 1. *cap.* 2. cited by Mr Simpson) says no more than what Dr Owen has done §, "That e-"very person hath distinctly its own substance; for "the one substance of the Deity is the substance of-"each person; so it is still but one: but each per-"son hath not its own distinct substance, because the

inducere, Hellenismum in ecclesiam introducentes. Christ. de Trin. cap. 6.

† Proceed. Ass. 1728. page 29. 30.

‡ State, page 173.

‖ Ibid. page 91.

§ Doct. Trin. vind. page 86.

" substance of them all is the same, as hath been pro-
" ved." And elsewhere, * " A divine person is
" nothing but the divine essence, upon the account of
" an especial property subsisting in an especial man-
" ner; as, in the person of the Father, there is the
" divine essence or being, with its property of beget-
" ting the Son." For Zanchy, in the foresaid place, gives an hint at the dispute that happened betwixt the Greek and Latin churches about the word *hypostasis*. The latter was not satisfied with that term, to denote the distinction there is between the sacred Three, which, in their opinion, signified † substance or being. It is known, that, to prevent farther differences, it was declared, that this term was intended to intimate a subsistence. And that learned author, both there and elsewhere, contends strenuously for the numerical substance or essence; both against these who said, he was not of the same essence with the Father, but ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων; and those who said, that he was of the same substance, but *per traducem*, and of an alike essence, but not of the same in number. He likewise asserts, that the generation of the Son is absolutely eternal; that he is begotten, not by will, but by nature, and that he is *Deus natura*; and, by consequence, that he is a necessary Being; and proves, that the name JEHOVAH, importing necessary existence and independent being, is ascribed to him in innumerable places of scripture; and maintains it, that he, together with the Father and Holy Spirit, is the one true eternal God. He guards, with some caution, against Sabellianism, which is likewise a pernicious extreme; and shews, that a Trinity is not one God with three qualities, or nominal differences, but

* Ibid. page 83.

† Miramur illos Catholicos probari posse, qui Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, tres substantias confitentur. Fulgent.

that, in the one Godhead, there are three persons, though the same in substance or essence, yet truly distinguished from one another, by their personal properties; so that the Father cannot be the begotten Son, nor the Son the unbegotten Father. Though he doth not pretend to define the nature of these personal characters, which is not revealed: "Persona," saith he, in the place referred to, "Est ipsa essentia "divina, proprio subsistendi modo distincta." And below,—"Possumus vere dicere, ipsum Patrem esse "ipsam divinam essentiam, non simpliciter, sed quatenus cum hac proprietate consideratur, quæ est, "esse ingenitum, et generare; et ita Filiam esse eandem essentiam divinam, non simpliciter, sed quatenus cum hac proprietate huic peculiari considera"tur, quæ est, esse a patre genitum.—Quid enim est "Pater? est Deus ingenitus, et generans. Quid Fi"lius? Deus non generans, sed genitus."—From all which, it is evident, that Owen and Zanchy, these two great men, speak the same thing on this important point. And that if they seem at any time to drop any expressions that Mr Simpson would construct as favouring some part of his hypothesis, their agreement with him is in sound, and in words, and not in sense or meaning. But since, it has not only been found proven against him, that he denied that the persons of the Trinity are numerically one in substance or essence; but he defends this proposition, by inculcating a distinction betwixt the essence, it seems, common to all the persons, and the substance which is not one in number, and therefore certainly two or more in number. It appears he hath receded from the doctrine received in this, and in all the Christian churches. *Substantia*, according to the common meaning of the word among the Latins, and as used in philosophy, is *ens per se existens*. Now since,

according to him, as the Assembly have found, the Father is one substance in number, the Son another substance in number. Then, according to the other propositions found proven against him, the Father is a necessary substance, and the Son a distinct and a contingent substance; in so far so, that necessary existence, the term *supremus Deus*, and the title of the only true God, may be taken in a sense that includes the personal property of the Father, and so not belonging to the Son, which appears so gross at first view, that I need not farther lay it open.

This gross opinion is contrary to our Confession and Catechisms †; where it is asserted, that "there "is but one only living and true God: That in the "unity of the Godhead, there are three persons of "one substance:——And that there be three persons "in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy "Ghost; and these three are one true eternal God, "the same in substance, equal in power and glory," although distinguished by their personal properties. All which, laid together, imports such a strict unity in the Godhead, as there can be but one substance, one in number, or numerically, and can never be reconciled to the notion of three distinct substances or beings in the Godhead.

Before I proceed to confirm the doctrine of the numerical oneness laid down in our Confession, I may add, what the learned Dr Waterland (whom I suppose no man of common understanding will charge with Sabellian principles) has said excellently to this purpose, *viz.* "If therefore the Son, according "to the Nicene fathers, was not from any other sub-

† Confess c. 2. sect. 1. 3. Larg. Cat. Answ. to Quest. 9.

"stance besides the Father's, nor from nothing; it "is very plain, that unless they supposed a division of "substance, which they absolutely reject, they sup- "posed the Son to be of the same undivided or indi- "vidual substance with the Father." And he says to his opponent, "It lies upon you, in this case, to "prove the negative, *viz.* That no union whatever "can make two persons one being, one τὸ Θεῖον, one "God. You are to shew the supposition impossible "in the nature of the thing; that is, I humbly con- "ceive, you are to prove what you can know nothing "of, and are to work up a demonstration without "ideas." He adds elsewhere, "Nor would Sa- "bellius have been censured for holding one hypo- "stasis only, had he meant one substance.——The "truth is, the church also professed one substance; "one eternal, immutable, uncreated substance; and "this they understood by God, notwithstanding they "believed the Son, and Holy Spirit, to be substan- "tially God. Praxeas, Noetus, Sabellius, *&c.* not "conceiving how one substance could be more than "one person innovated upon the faith of the church." Then he gives it as his opinion, "That from his (Dr "Clark) declaring expressly against the consubstan- "tiality of the Son, whether specific or individual; "—as also from his excluding the Son out of the "one Godhead;—it is exceeding clear that he "has determined against the church, and declared "for Arianism."

Dr Clark owns, that infinite substance is a definition of the supreme God, in the metaphysical sense. We know nothing of two infinite substances, or beings, which would imply a gross contradiction. To deny the Son to be the one infinite Substance or Being, would be impious blasphemy against the whole of

divine revelation contained in the holy scriptures; which, with the greatest harmony, and most convincing evidence, assert his proper Deity. And we know nothing of one supreme, and another inferior god: nor of three substances in one undivided essence, or of a distinction betwixt essence and substance. These have been looked upon as synonimous terms, both by the ancients, and by the moderns; such as Dr Owen, Dr Waterland, and others. But we maintain the catholic doctrine, that the three persons of the ever-blessed Trinity are of one substance or essence.

I. This unity of substance, or essence, is plainly and fully asserted in scripture. Moses instructs Israel in the faith of this article, "Hear, O Israel, JEHOVAH "our God is one JEHOVAH." We have seen above, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the GOD OF ISRAEL, and the JEHOVAH. Wherefore, in this place, together with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, he is said to be the one JEHOVAH *; that is, the one infinite, eternal, and independent Being or Substance.

AND as this doctrine hath been taught by † Moses, so a greater than Moses, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, asserts the unity of substance or essence, when he says, "I and my Father are one," John x. 30. Not one person; but one only living and true God, of

* Cum filium & Patrem nominamus duos Deos, non dicimus, siquidem nobis est unus Deus, uti Moses asserit, Deut. vi. 4. Epiphan. in Ancorita.

† Non ignoravit Moses, unum Deum, hoc est, unam divinitatis naturam, in ὁμοουσία Triadi adorari, nimirum in Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto; quamvis enim subsistentiis propriis subsistere credantur:——Pater enim est Pater, Filius Filius, Spiritus Spiritus. Identitas tamen essentiæ eos ad unitatem Colligit. Cyril. L. 4. con. Julian.

the ſame ſubſtance or eſſence: which is the plain meaning of the text, as appears, if we conſider, that becauſe Chriſt, in the text, called GOD his Father, the Jews, by a juſt conſequence, preſently inferred, "That he made himſelf God, and equal to God." And yet Chriſt was ſo far from denying the inference, (as moſt certainly he would, and ought to have done, if it had not been true), that he confirms it in ſuch a manner, as neither to provoke their farther malice, nor yet to ſtifle the truth. Their charge of blaſphemy againſt him was, "Thou being a man, "makeſt thyſelf God." In anſwer to which, he tells them, in effect, that he could not blaſpheme, by calling himſelf the Son of God, thereby denying the charge of blaſphemy; but allowing at the ſame time, that the terms *God*, and *Son of God*, ſignify one and the ſame thing. Which he more expreſsly declares in the beginning of the next chapter, where he ſaith to the diſciples, "This ſickneſs (of Laza-"rus) is not unto death, but for the glory of God; "that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." Here the words *God*, and *Son of God*, are uſed as terms of the ſame import and ſignificancy. It is obvious likewiſe, that our Saviour here aſcribeth the preſervation of his ſheep, not to the will, but to the power of his Father; and to his own power, which he proveth to be the ſame with the power of his Father, *i. e.* Omnipotence; becauſe, ſaith our Lord, "I and the Father are one;" one God, one in power, becauſe one in ſubſtance or eſſence. This is the obvious meaning of the text, and which is farther illuſtrated, from what he ſays in the context: "As "the Father knoweth me, even ſo I know the Fa-"ther," John x. 15.; with the ſame comprehenſive knowledge; which were blaſphemy for any being,

† but the one God, to pretend to. For " who, by " searching, can find out God, even the Almighty, " to perfection?" He says farther, " I have power " to lay it (my life) down, and I have power to " take it again," verse. 18. What more convincing arguments of Omnipotence can be adduced, than that our Lord is Creator of the universe, (which is proved in these sheets); and that he not only has power to quicken dead souls, and raise dead bodies, but to raise himself from the dead? Again, he is so one in substance or essence with the Father, that " he giveth to his disciples eternal life, and they " shall never perish," Context, ver. 28. Now, eternal life is expressly affirmed to be the " gift of " God," Rom. vi. 23. And it is a convincing evidence, that our Jesus is the one God; because he hath purchased by his own merits, promiseth in his own name, and bestoweth by his own power, eternal life upon all that believe in his name; yea, and he is that eternal life himself: for this life is in the Son; and " he that hath the Son, hath life," 1 John v. 11. 12. It is life, it is heaven, to know him, to enjoy him, who is the " true God and eternal life," John xvii. 3. 1 John v. 20. And towards the close of this chapter, our Lord declares, that there is a glorious, mysterious, mutual, essential in-being of the persons of the Godhead. " That ye may know and believe " that the Father is in me, and I in the Father ‡,"

† Καθως et ωσπερ quum de Patre et Filio dicuntur, non similitudinis, sed æqualitatis notæ, sicut supra, cap. 5. 26. Non solus sed cum veteri Ecclesia sic Interpretor. Zanch in Loc.

‡ Sunt enim in se invicem Personæ Trinitatis et se mutuo permeant, immeantque, Nam quælibet totam habet Essentiam, ut hinc in Filio vera sit divinitas eadem, quæ in Patre est, et una persona nominata alteras includat per istam Εμπεριχωρησιν, sic iterum, Athanasius, Hilarius, Cyrillus. Leydec Exercit. de Symbolo Mosis, pag. 50.

ver. 38.; which undeniably proves the numerical oneness of substance or essence. It is therefore very manifest, from text and context, that our Lord asserts himself to be one God with the Father; and that since magistrates, because of some resemblance to God in their office, are called gods figuratively, how much more might he, being one God with the Father, be called God, in the most proper sense of the word!

And the apostle John saith to the same purpose, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the "Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and "these three are one." "The three heavenly wit-"nesses," saith that excellent author, the learned Dr Calamy, "are one thing, which cannot be said of "the three witnesses on earth; for they are different "things. These are so one, that all the three have "but one and the same substance. Though they testify "distinctly, yet they are one, not only in consent and "will, but in essence too, in the very same sense as our "Lord said, I and my Father are one †." And this oneness can respect nothing but the nature, being, substance, or essence of God. God is one in this respect. And the whole divine nature is in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and in each of them considered distinctly, as one of the ancients says, "Though "there are three, in whom the Godhead is, yet there "is in them three but one Godhead ‡." And whereas it is queried, If these three are not distinguished by some perfections, how are they at all distinguished? It is answered, Though the scriptures represent them as having all divine perfections in common, they yet distinguish them by their relation to each other, and by their different concern and œco-

† See Dr Calamy on the Text.
‡ Gregor. Naz. 37. de Sp. Sancto.

nomy in the salvation of fallen man. We do not assert a Trinity of gods, which would be a contradiction, but a Trinity in the Godhead. And we have no reason to be ashamed, frankly to own ourselves ignorant, how the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, subsist in the one divine nature; since the scriptures no-where tell us, either in what manner the Son is begotten of the Father, or in what manner the Holy Ghost proceeds from Father and Son. It is enough for us to believe a Trinity in the Deity, because we have it revealed to us in our sacred records. It is no new thing for the Christian scheme to be ridiculed about its Trinity and Unity. For that profane wretch Lucian, who lived as long ago as in the year of our Lord 176, speaks of a god that was one of three, and three of one, which he represents as most absurd *. It is most certainly the God of Christians that is there referred to, and blasphemously insulted. And the passage shews, that it was at that time the current apprehension of the Pagans, that the Christians believed a God that was one, and yet three, or three in one Deity. Socinus took notice of this passage with surprise; and did not stick to declare, that he knew nothing in all antiquity more clear for the mystery of the Trinity, according to the modern notion of it. But those people justly deserve to fall under a general contempt, that will be bantered out of their religion by a profane jest. The great mysteries of the Christian religion, such as the incarnation of the Son of God, a Trinity in unity, and unity in Trinity, were what such wretches as Celsus, and Porphyry, Julian, and Lucian ridiculed. But, both in ancient and modern times, "wisdom is justified of her children." If we may represent every thing of that nature as absurd in it

* See Le Moyn Varia Sacra, vol. II. page 186.

self,- because we cannot conceive how it can be, we may lay the scriptures aside, and follow our own fancies. For what can a divine revelation signify, that must be under our correction! Several of the divine perfections, demonstrable from the principles of natural religion, such as omnipresence and eternity, can no more be accounted for by us, than a Trinity in unity.

II. FATHER and Son are one object of religious worship and adoration. We are baptized in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: and if these into whose name we are baptized, be not one in nature, we are, by our baptism, engaged into the worship of more gods than one. If Christ is not God by nature, he is excluded from being the object of our worship; but it is plain, from our being baptized in his name, and from other arguments that shall be adduced, that he is the proper object of religious worship. He is therefore God by nature; and if by nature so, he has the same nature with the one God. And (as Dr Owen expresseth himself) "this natu-"ral Godhead of God is †, the substance or essence, "with all the holy divine excellencies, which natu-"rally and necessarily appertain thereunto. This "one nature or essence being the nature or essence of "God as God, is the nature or essence of the Father, "Son, and Spirit: one and the same absolutely in "and unto each of them. For none can be God, "as they are revealed to be, but by virtue of this "divine nature or being. Herein consists the unity "of the Godhead."

OUR Lord Jesus representeth himself with the Father as one proper object of faith. "Ye believe in

† Dr Owen's Doct. Trin. Vind.

"God, believe also in me," John xiv. 1. Now, scripture and reason plainly teach us, that God alone is the proper object of faith: and yet here our Saviour makes the act of believing to be the same, whether fixed upon God, or upon himself, Jer. xvii. 5. 7. And certainly the identity of the act strongly implies an equality in the object: in whom can we believe, as both able and willing to help us in every thing that our indigent nature stands in need of, but an almighty and all-sufficient Being, the infinite and eternal God.

III. It is plain, that God being the Father, and Christ being the only-begotten of the Father, he must partake of the substance of the Father; and if he partake of the substance of the Father, he must be one in substance with the Father; because the divine substance is but one, as being infinite and indivisible. To this purpose, we find the learned Bishop Pearson arguing strongly for the consubstantiality, "Because "the divine nature, as it is absolutely immaterial and "incorporeal, is also indivisible, Christ cannot have "any part of it only communicated unto him, but "the whole, by which he must be acknowledged co-"essential, of the same substance with the Father; as "the council of Nice determined, and the ancient fa-"thers before them taught. Hence appeareth the "truth of these words of our Saviour, which raised a "second motion in the Jews to stone him; "I and "my Father are one," John x. 30. where the plu-"rality of the verb, and the neutrality of the noun, "with the distinction of their persons, speak a per-"fect identity of their essence *."

Upon the whole, when we consider that the deny-

* Pearson on the Creed, page 135.

ing one substance in number was Arius' leading fallacy; that the identity of substance or essence was what the Nicene fathers earnestly contended for, and what all orthodox divines do still harmoniously maintain: and when we consider, that though the persons of the blessed Trinity are distinguished, one from another, by proper characters, yet all the essential attributes of the Deity are common to them all, and the divine nature equal in them all: ‡ that the Son is as truly, and in all respects, as much our one God, as the Father himself: and that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one, true, eternal God; one object of faith, worship, and adoration: and that the Son, as begotten of the Father, must partake, in some glorious, inconceivable manner, of the same undivided or individual substance with the Father. We must, with the strongest evidence, conclude, and firmly believe, that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are the one living and true God, of one substance or essence in number. We shall only add what is said in the conclusion of the Athanasian Creed, "The Godhead of

‡ Bishop Bull's Imp. Points of Prim. Christ. page 928. and some pages before, maintains the Son's consubstantiality with the Father, and likewise his co-eternity, and equality to the Father, as to nature and essence. And page 926. he cites Damascene, *Lib.* 3. *Of the orthodox faith*, *cap.* 5 discoursing thus of the divine persons: "We know that they (the persons) cannot "depart, or be separated from each other, and are united, and "dwell in one another, without confusion.—For though each "person is a perfect subsistence, and has its own property, that "is, a different manner of existing, yet are they united in their "essence, and natural properties; and in as much as they are "not separated, nor do withdraw from the subsistence of the Father, they both are, and are said to be *one God*." *Hi tres, quia unius substantiæ sunt, unum sunt. ubi nulla, naturarum, nulla est diversitas voluntatum*, Aug. Con. Max. *L. b.* 2 page 698.

" the Father, and of the Son, is all one; the glory e-
" qual, the majesty co-eternal."

CHAP. VII.

Our Lord JESUS CHRIST *the Supreme, or Most High God.*

ACCORDING to the principles laid down in the holy scriptures, and even the common dictates of reason, whoever is truly and properly God, must be supreme, as well as omnipotent, omniscient, or possessed of any other divine excellency; and a subordinate god is no true and proper god at all. One way, in which the Polytheism of the Pagan world is exposed in scripture, is, by representing the weakness and folly of any subordinate deities, under one as supreme. The common language of the true God was this. " I am the Lord, and there is none else. " There is no god besides me *". If. xlv. 5. and xliv. 8. and xlvi. 9.

THE Venerable Assembly have found it relevant and proven against Mr Simpson ‡, that he had taught or vented, that the terms, *supremus Deus, necessary existence*, &c. *may be taken*; and are, by some authors, taken in a sense that includes the personal property of the Father, and so not belonging to the Son.

To the same purpose, he says, in his letter to the presbytery of Glasgow, " When I had read in Pic-
" tet, *Christus est summus Deus*, I said, It was to be

* Irenæus saith, " He that has any one above him, and is in the
" power of another, can neither be said to be god, nor a great
" king." Adv. Hæret. *Lib.* 4. *cap.* 5.

‡ Proceed. Ass. 1728. page 41.

"understood *cum grano salis* *. Though I do not remember, that I then used this expression; yet I think it is probable that I might, because I often use it on the like occasions; namely, when a term is not to be taken in the greatest latitude, wherein it is used by some authors." It is very plain, that no Trinitarian, ascribing the term *summus Deus*, in its greatest latitude to the Son, did, at any time, understand any more by it, than that the Son is very and eternal God, as well as the Father. It was never meant by it that the Son was unbegotten; so Pictet understands it. Why then did he give such a caution, upon reading this term in Pictet, unless he ascribes a proper supremacy to the Father, and that in an higher sense than any orthodox divine has ever done? If any sound divine understood, by this title, the personal property of the Father, yet all they meant by it was, that the Father was unbegotten, and the first person in order; as is evident, from their maintaining the consubstantiality and the necessary existence of the Son. But it is plain, that the modern refiners on the Arian scheme understand something else; and that Mr Simpson doth so too, is evident, not only from his teaching, as above, an use of the term in its latitude, wherein it agreeth to the Father, and not to the Son; but from his definition of person, his denying the necessary existence of the Son, and the numerical oneness. If the Father be a distinct intelligent Agent from the Son, and not the same, but another substance in number, and likewise the supreme God, in a sense in which the Son is not; he must be so in the higest sense, in so far that the Father would be God only and alone, in the proper sense of the word. According to our

* State, page 19. where he likewise supposes, that this term may be taken in a sense that includes the Father's personal property.

Confession, chap. viii. § 2. "The Son is very and e-"ternal God, of one substance, and equal with the "Father:" and therefore, according to the received doctrine in this church, the Son is the Most High God, as well as the Father *. And this doctrine is founded upon the holy scriptures, and clearly revealed in them, as the sequel will shew.

THE Son is as truly, and in all respects, as much our one God, as the Father himself; and therefore we cannot ascribe any proper supremacy to the Father. The Son is one God with the Father; and therefore the Most High God, as well as the Father. If he has not the same Godhead with him, he has no proper Godhead at all. Although our Lord says, "My Father is greater than I;" yet it must be observed, that he does not say, God is greater than I, but my Father is so. For which reason he plainly refers to his Mediatorship: though "being in the "form of God, he thought it no robbery to be equal "with God; yet making himself of no reputation, "and taking upon him the form of a servant," on purpose that he might act the part of a Mediator between his Father and sinful men; he, in that respect, without any impeachment to his proper Divinity, might say his Father was greater: but still, as to Godhead, there was an equality. Though the Son, in the text † cited, owns the Father greater; he yet says elsewhere, "I and my Father are one," John x. 30.; which declaration Hilary ‡ opposes to the other, and that very justly: there can therefore

* See likewise Larg. Cat. ans. to quest. 9.

† Hilar. de Trin. lib. 9. thus explains this text, the Father (says he) is greater than the Son, considered as Man and Mediator.

‡ Vide Hilar. de Trin. lib. 2. pag. 21.

be no greater inequality between them, than is consistent with an oneness that is every way peculiar. Had not an oneness of Godhead and divine perfections been there meant, the Jews could never have thought he made himself God in pretending to it. Now, the Son could not be thus one with the Father, and yet the Father be greater than he was, as God. Our Lord also says, "All things that the "Father hath are mine*;" so that he has all the perfections and rights, the same nature and Godhead, the same honour and glory with the Father: he is therefore the Most High God, as well as the Father. The ancients put this saying of our Lord upon the foot of his exinanition, whereby he did, for a time, † lessen himself, and become inferior to himself, to the Father, and Holy Ghost. Upon the whole, the meaning of our blessed Saviour's words is plain and obvious; "If ye loved me, ye would re-"joice, because I said, I go unto the Father; for "my Father is greater than I" now appear, or you apprehend me to be; as he, for the present, sustains the whole character of the Deity, and I only that of Mediator.

That this high character doth belong to Christ, shall be made evident from some arguments, grounded upon express testimonies of scripture, and by natural and easy deductions from them.

I. Not only do the holy scriptures ascribe to our

* Vide Dr Wat. serm. on this text, serm. 6. page 195.

† Propterea, Patrem dicit esse majorem, quia seipsum exinanivit, formam servi accipiens, non amittens Dei: propter quam formam servi, non tantum Patre, verum etiam seipso, et Spiritu Sancto, minor factus est. Aug. ep. 66. ad Max. As to other objections against our Lord's supreme Deity, see them answered by Dr Wat. Dr Calamy, Mr Boyse, &c.

Lord Jesus the title of the *Most High* *, Luke i. 76. but manifestly declare, that religious worship and adoration is to be paid to him; a most convincing demonstration that he is the Most High God. To set this argument in a true light, it is only necessary to shew, that religious worship, by the holy scriptures, is appropriated to the one Most High God: and that, notwithstanding, it is given to our Lord Jesus Christ, a plain evidence, that he is the one, true, and supreme God. That religious worship is appropriated to the one, true, and Most High God, appears from that plain precept, "Thou shalt have "no other gods before" or besides "me," Exod. xx. 3.: which is farther explained, verse. 5. (the reason being the same, both with respect to images and false gods), "Thou shalt not bow down to them, "nor serve them:" and Deut. x. 20. "Thou shalt "fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve:" which is quoted and explained by our blessed Lord himself, in these words: "Thou shalt worship the "Lord thy God; and him only shalt thou serve," Matth. iv. 10. This was said in answer to Satan, who did not pretend to be supreme. All that he required was, that an outward act of adoration should be paid him. And the reason given for refusing it, is not that he was a bad spirit, or that God had not commanded that he should be worshipped; but the reason is general, that none are to be worshipped but God only. And that these, and the like texts, were intended to exclude all beings, beside the one, true, and Most High God, from being worshipped, appears

* Vide Leigh. Crit. Sac. "The names of the Father, God "Almighty, the Most High, The Lord of hosts, The King of "Israel,—belong to the Son likewise. All that the Father hath, "saith he, is mine; why not then his names?" Tertul. con. Prax. cap. 17. cit. apud Bull.

not only from the reason of the thing, but from plain texts of scripture. Is. xliii. 10. "Before me was "there no god formed, neither shall there be after "me." Deut xiii. 1. 2. 3. "If there arise among "you a prophet,—and giveth thee a sign, and the "sign come to pass,—saying, Let us go after other "gods, and serve them,——thou shalt not hearken." The worship of the one Most High God, exclusive of all others, is, by this, for ever made unchangeable. Miracles could not be sufficient to give credit to any one who would pretend to introduce another object of worship. The nature of religious worship, is an owning the object we worship to have all divine perfections: it is an ascription of these to the object, adoring him, submitting to him, depending on him, trusting in him, seeking from him all we want, giving him the sole praise of what we have, dedicating ourselves, and our all, to him. Hence the apostle condemns those who "did service to them, which, by na-"ture, are no gods;" and intimates, that the idolatry of the Heathens lay in their worshipping of the creature, and not the Creator only, the Most High God. The angel, Rev. xix. refused to receive so much as the outward act of adoration; giving this rule upon it, *Worship God;* intimating thereby, that God only is to be worshipped. From all which, it is manifest, that, by the scriptures, all religious worship is declared to belong to the * one, true, and Most High God, and to him only; and that upon such

* Θεον μεν μονον προσκυνυμεν, Just. Mart. apolog. 1. cap. 23. Θεω δε τω ουτως Θεω και αληθει προσκυνω—ουκ αλλω εξον εστι —προσκυνεισθαι αλλ' ἡμονω Θεω. Theophil. pag. 30. 33. Quod colimus Deus unus est, Tertul apolog. cap. 17. Dominum Deum tuum adorare oportet, et ipsi soli servire. Irenæus, pag. 320. Vide Clement. Alex. pag. 55. et Orig. contra Cel. pag. 158.

reasons as exclude all creature-worship; namely, because he is God, JEHOVAH, eternal, immutable; Creator, Preserver, Sustainer, and Governor of all things. God himself hath fixed the sense and meaning of religious worship: it means, by divine institution and appointment, the divinity, the supremacy, the sovereignty of its object. To misapply those marks of dignity, those appropriate ensigns of divine Majesty, is to make common what God has made proper; is to deify the works of God's hands, and to serve the creature instead of the Creator, "God blessed for "ever." To all which I might add, that all the Catholic writers, before the council of Nice, (if we may believe the * learned), unanimously agree in this, as an indisputable point, that the *supreme God alone* is to be worshipped; and always urged it with equal zeal and success against Pagan idolatry and superstition. That religious worship, appropriate to the Most High God, has been, in all ages of the church, given to the Son, is very manifest: he had distinct worship paid to him in his own person, long before his incarnation. "It is the unanimous opinion of all antiquity," says Dr Clark, "that the Angel who appeared to Moses "in a flame of fire in a bush, and said, I am the God "of thy fathers,—was Christ †." This same person then, allowed on all hands to be Christ, demanded of Moses a signal instance of divine homage, when he said to him, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, "for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground;" made so by the special presence of the Speaker, the *Most High God*. For, as none but the supreme God is to be worshipped; so no deputation from the Most

* Bull prim. trad. pag 3.

† Dr Clark, script. doct. pag. 114. as to his pretence, that the Son spake in the person of the Father, this has been confuted by Dr Waterland, def. pag. 33.

High God, nor any thing short of the peculiar manifestation of a divine Person, can immediately turn a field or a mountain into a *chapel.*

NOTWITHSTANDING of what some have pretended †, it can be evinced, that he was worshipped under the Old Testament, in the capacity of Creator. To this purpose is that passage of the Psalmist, cited by the apostle Paul, and expressly ascribed by him to our Saviour, "I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of "my days; thy years are throughout all generations. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; "and the heavens are the work of thine hands ‡." I mention the former verse, (which is not quoted by the apostle), only to shew, that the Person addressed to here, under the title of, *O my God*, is the same Person that is praised or invoked in the latter verse, as the Founder or Creator of the earth and the heavens.

THERE is no one act of worship, that is, in the holy scriptures, ascribed to the Father, that is not also ascribed to the Son. Is the Father to be called upon, and religiously invocated, for all needful supplies of grace? So also is the Son, as appears from Acts ix. 4. 1 Cor. i. 2. Must the Father have inward worship and veneration? So also should the Son, Rom. x. 11. 13. 14. Is the Father to be believed in or trusted? So also is the Son, John xiv. 1. Is the Father to be loved supremely? So also is the Son; whom we are to love more than life itself. Are we to resign our wills to the will of the Father, and live to his glory, as our end? The like is also required as

† Modest plea, page 28.

‡ See Dr Knight's sermons, page 53. for a fuller proof, that the apostle intended this passage of the Son.

to the Son, Matth. xi. 19. 2 Cor. v. 15. We are to "live to him who died for us." Is the Father to have praise and thanksgiving returned him? It is the same with the Son. Hence it is, that we, in the New Testament, have such variety of *doxologies* to the Son, as well as the Father; which are a part of the worship here on earth; and we have intimations given us of a like worship in heaven above, where *blessing*, and *honour*, and *glory*, and *power*, are jointly ascribed "unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the "Lamb, and that for ever and ever." Is the Father to be prayed to? So also is the Son, Acts vii. 59. 2 Cor. xii. 7. 8. 9. The whole canon of scripture is closed with a direct address to Christ, in these words: "Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus." An higher homage cannot be paid to any one, as the supreme God, than has been done to our Lord Jesus, by the whole church, from age to age; and that by divine appointment, in the two sacraments of the New Testament.

All acknowledge that worship to be sovereign and supreme, that is paid directly to the Father: and since the very same is here paid to the Son, how can we imagine it to be less than supreme? If it be alledged, that divine worship is paid to the Son, on the sole account of his Mediatorship; it is owned, that he ought to be worshipped on account of his Mediatorship; but that he is worshipped only on that account, it is denied. The angels, who have no interest in Christ as Mediator, are represented as paying the very same divine honour and worship to the Son, as they do to the Father. And there are three instances of invocation, in the New Testament, directed immediately to Christ, Acts i. 24. "Thou, Lord, "which knowest the hearts of all men." Heb. i. 10.

"Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foun-
"dation of the earth." Acts vii. 60. "Lord, lay
"not this sin to their charge." The very matter, in each of these addresses to Christ, most evidently shews, that he was not worshipped barely as Mediator, but as the *Searcher of hearts*, as the *Creator of the universe*; as the "*God who alone can forgive sins.*" And when we pray to the Father through, or in the name of the Son, we are so far from paying a *mediate* or diminutive worship to the Son, that, on the contrary, we plead his infinite dignity, and offer the infinite satisfaction he has made for us to the Father: and this is so far from lessening, that it magnifies the dignity and excellency of Christ's person and sufferings; which are so infinitely available, and so *omnipotent*, as to bring together and reconcile two the most distant things in the world, a *Pure God* and a *sinful creature*. And when we pray to Christ as Mediator, we must consider him as an *omniscient, omnipresent* Being; without which our prayer would be turned into sin. And is it possible, with such thoughts as these about us, to pay him a *mediate* or inferior worship? Neither is the worship paid to Christ ultimately referred to the Father; since all things were created by the Son, as the efficient Cause, and for him, as the final Cause, Col. i. 16. It is plain from hence, that rational creatures may *finally* and *ultimately* worship the Son of God, by whom, and for whose service and glory, the said creatures were made. Nor is this worship due to him only, in virtue of a divine command: for we have likewise a divine command for worshipping the Father; and yet this is not the sole ground of the worship we pay him. We have shown, that divine worship is appropriated to the one, true, and Most High God; and since we are commanded to worship Christ, it shews, that he is

the true supreme God. Divine worship is due to him therefore, not only because commanded, but it is commanded, because it is his unalienable right.

To all which, I might add what the learned Dr Waterland observes †, "That the ancients expressly "assert the Son's right and title to religious worship; "particularly Origen ‡, in his book against Celsus, "the most valuable of all his works, asserts the Son "to have the fullest right and title to religious wor- "ship. He speaks of his being worshipped as God "by the Magi, and calls it Εὐσέβεια, the very same "word which he uses, speaking of the worship due "to the Father. He (Origen) speaks of worship- "ping Father and Son jointly, as one God; and men- "tions the worship of the Son, in his distinct person- "al capacity. And since the Son is to be worship- "ped, it must be with supreme worship, due to the "one supreme God: because there is no possible "room left in scripture for that absurd distinction "‖ betwixt sovereign and inferior adoration. Infe- "rior or relative worship appears to be a plain con- "tradiction in sense, as it is novel in sound, like an "inferior or relative god." Now, religious worship being required, and offered to the Most High God alone, not for recognizing the personal properties of the Father, but the essential perfections of the Deity §, common to all the persons of the blessed Trinity; seeing that divine worship, properly so call-

† Dr Water. 1st Def.

‡ Origen cont. Celsus, page 46. 160. 386. 238. 239. cit a Wat. Vide Just. Mart. Ap. 1. page 11. Tertal. ap. c. 21. Clem. Alex. page 311. cit. ibid.

‖ Ibid.

§ Non potest Deus cuiquam divinum cultum communicare, cui non et naturam atque excellentiam divinam (cujus nulla creatura capax est) largiatur. Bull's Prim. Trad. page 36.

ed, is, in every kind and degree, incommunicably due to the supreme God alone, by a fundamental maxim of law and gospel, by the constant doctrine of Moses and the prophets, of Christ and his apostles, and of the whole catholic church in every age. And it being entirely repugnant to the nature, reason, and truth of things, to suppose two different objects of worship, the one, in some sense, a supreme, the other, in some sense, an inferior being or substance: and since, nevertheless, we find, that the highest kind and degree of worship, even the worship of *Latria*, has, from the beginning, been actually ascribed to our Saviour, that he was worshipped before his incarnation, and will be after the ceasing of his mediatorial kingdom *; and seeing the inspired writers have asserted his divine right to supreme worship, on the same solid grounds upon which the Father's title to worship is founded; and since an identity of worship does necessarily infer an equality of nature, it is very manifest, from the whole, that the Son of God is of the same undivided nature and substance with the Father, inseparable from him, in glory equal †, and in majesty co-eternal; and that he is the one, true, supreme, or Most High God, as well as the Father.

II. The supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ may be clearly evinced, from his supreme dominion, whether œconomical, or natural. Christ, considered as Mediator, is constituted by the Father, supreme Governor of the world: but this he could not have been, if he were not the true and Most High God,

* See to this purpose the learned Mr Johnson, serm. 1. page 47. and Bull's Prim. Trad. page 37. cit. apud Johnson. Ibid.

† Deus quamvis omnipotens, non potuit vel inæqualem sibi gignere Filium, vel æqualem condere creaturam. Bernard.

as well as man, antecedently qualified, by his proper Divinity, for the full exercise of his high office, and regal authority. And though the mode of Christ's dominion will hereafter be changed; yet the glory, the beatitude, and the majesty of it, shall never pass away. When "he shall have delivered up the king-"dom to the Father," as God-man, he shall † continue, even then, sitting upon his Father's throne, and receive the praises and adorations of his ransomed ones. As Son of God, he will subsist in the form of God; and, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be acknowledged and adored by all the host of heaven, to all eternity. But seeing, in the present administration of his kingdom, "all power, in the "ultimate extent of its infinity, is given unto him ‡:" and since the kingdom is not yet resigned, nor the Son now subject to the Father, supremacy of dominion, even in this respect, which some pretend, is the peculiar mark of the one supreme God, must certainly belong to the Son.

Our blessed Saviour may, by an easy and natural deduction, be clearly proved to be naturally supreme Governor of the world; for, as that learned author, Mr Johnson, has well observed ‖, "he is often stiled "Jehovah, the proper, peculiar, and incommuni-"cable name of the Most High God, importing ne-

† "He shall reign,—to the complete eternity of the duration "of his humanity, which, for the future, is co-eternal to his "Divinity.—The ancient fathers added these words to the Ni-"cene Creed, *Whose kingdom shall have no end*, against the he-"resy of Marcellus, denying the eternity of Christ's kingdom." Pearson on the Creed, page 283.

‡ Ibid.

‖ Mr Johnson's supreme dominion of the Son, serm. 3. page 4. 5. 9.

"ceſſary exiſtence, and abſolute independent being, "the fountain and foundation of all that is or can "be: and muſt therefore have, in himſelf, the ground "of all dominion whatſoever, and be capable, *per ſe*, "of governing a whole world of creatures. And "ſince he is evidently declared in ſcripture to be the "Creator of the univerſe, he muſt have a natural "right to govern whatever he hath created. And "ſeeing he is ſtiled, in the old Teſtament, the Lord "of hoſts, the King of glory; it is evident, that, be-"fore his incarnation, he had ſupreme dominion in "the higheſt heavens; and that his authority there "was equal to the Father's."

To prove Chriſt Mediator, is to prove him God: to prove his œconomical ſupremacy, is to demonſtrate, at the ſame time, his eſſential Divinity. Chriſt, as Mediator, had not been capable of an œconomical ſupremacy, if he had not, as God, been naturally ſupreme Governor of the world *. Upon the whole, it is very manifeſt, that, ſince ſupreme dominion, both œconomical and natural, are aſcribed to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the holy ſcriptures, he muſt be acknowledged to be the one, true, ſupreme, or Moſt High God.

III. The apoſtle Paul expreſsly aſſerts, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the ſupreme Being, than whom there is none greater. For, ſaith he, "When God "made promiſe to Abraham, becauſe he could ſwear "by no greater; he ſware by himſelf, ſaying, Sure-"ly, bleſſing, I will bleſs thee," Heb. vi. 13.14.—The paſſage in the Old Teſtament, to which the apoſtle

* See this abundantly proved by Mr Johnſon, ſerm. 3. on the Son's dominion, page 33.

here plainly alludes, is as follows:—"And the Angel "of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and ſaid, "Now, I know that thou feareſt God, ſeeing thou haſt "not with-held thy ſon, thine only ſon, from me. And "the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of "heaven the ſecond time, and ſaid, By myſelf have "I ſworn, ſaith the Lord; for becauſe thou haſt done "this thing, and haſt not with-held thy ſon, thine "only ſon, that in bleſſing, I will bleſs thee." The apoſtle expreſsly declares of the perſon that made this promiſe to Abraham, That "becauſe he could "ſwear by no greater, he ſware by himſelf:" and ſince he could ſwear by no greater, it is undeniably clear that he muſt be ſupreme.

THIS Angel of the Lord could not be the Father, who is no where called an angel. An angel is ſent, and his office is miniſterial, which cannot be applied to the Father. This Angel condeſcended ſometimes to take on him human ſhape, which we have no reaſon to believe the Father ever did.

THIS Angel of the Lord could not be a created angel, who, when he ſweareth, he ſwears always by one greater than himſelf, Rev. x. 5. 6.

NOR is this Angel of the Lord to be underſtood of the perſon of the Son, repreſenting the ſupreme perſon of the Father, (as Dr Clark ſpeaks). For though an ambaſſador, having firſt declared that he is ſent, and from whom, may act in the name, and by the authority of another, but cannot ſpeak, as if he were the monarch that ſent him; it were abſurd, yea treaſonable, for him to ſay, "I am the king:" but here no ſuch declaration is made, and ſo no proviſion laid in againſt idolatry. For, when one ſpeaks in

the name of God, not as from God, but as God, and as the Most High God, who would judge but that religious worship were to be given to him? which is not to be given to any but the supreme Being, as we have seen above. But the Angel here speaks, not in the name of God, or from God, but as the Most High God, "Thou hast not with-held thine only son from "me; and, blessing, I will bless thee;" (an * Hebraism vehemently affirming the thing promised, and extending the matter promised), "I will bless thee," certainly, without fail; greatly, without measure; and eternally, without end; in such a manner, that "in thy seed all the nations of the earth shall be bless-"ed." And he is called, ὁ Θεος, † by the apostle, with the prefixed article, which, they say, is always understood of the supreme God, and cannot therefore be applied to any that represents him. Farther, "he swears by himself;" (and not by a greater person represented by him), the apostle gives the reason, "because he could swear by no greater:" wherefore there is no being greater than the Son of God; and therefore he is the supreme Being, the Most High God. Dr Waterland has demonstrated, that the ancients, (such as Tertullian, Theophilus Clement, Justin Martyr), ever looked upon the Son as the God of the Jews, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ‡; and that it is the opinion of these early

* Vide Dr. Owen on Heb. vi. 13.

† Θεος is sometimes the rendering of JEHOVAH. As to the objection founded on these words, "Saith the Lord," it is replied, these may be the words of Moses, shewing, for the support of faith, that he who interposed the oath, was so the Angel of the Lord, as to be the JEHOVAH: and such words are often used in the third person, when God himself is the Speaker, Jer. i. 19. & ii. 12. Zech. ii. 8. 9. He is said to speak from heaven, which is a description of God, Heb. xii. 12.

‡ Dr Wat. Def. page 33. 34.

writers, that Christ appeared and spake in his own person, who, being really God, might, in his own right, truly and justly assume those high titles; and yet designing, in his own due time, to take human nature upon him, might more suitably condescend to act ministerially among men, a proper prelude to his incarnation, and so might be not only God, but an angel too.

If we take but a passing view of his different appearances to the patriarchs, we may observe, in each of them, convincing evidences of his true and supreme Deity. It is not improbable, that it was our glorious Emmanuel, the second person of the Godhead, who, as the Angel of the Lord, did, in some especial manner, appear to our first parents, Gen. iii. 8. 9. and carried to them the comfortable message of God's grace and good-will towards men *, who is there called Jehovah Elohim, which are the eminent titles of the Most High God.

He is the God of glory who appeared to Abraham †, Gen. xii. Acts vii. when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, who entered into covenant with him, and blessed him. Hence Melchizedec pronounced him blessed of the Most High God, Gen. xiv. 19. He appeared again to him in the plains of Mamre; Abraham worshipped him, calling him Jehovah, and the Judge of all the earth: which are manifest characters of the Most High God. He met Jacob at Peniel, in the day of his distress, as a man in appearance, an angel in office; and yet, in name and nature, "God over all, blessed for ever."

* Dr Owen on the Heb. Exer. 10. vide Tertul. adv. Prax. cap 16.

† Vide Zanch. de Trib. Elohim. in Gen. xii.

He bleſſeth Jacob at his importunate deſire, Gen. xxxii. : from hence, Jacob concludes, that he had ſeen God, and calls the name of the place Peniel, *i. e.* the face of God. He is ſtiled the God of Beth-el, * to whom Jacob built an altar, and vowed a vow, "That "the Lord ſhould be his God." And Jacob, when a dying, invocates this Angel, who had redeemed him from all evil; the God who had fed him all his days, for his preſence with, and his bleſſing upon the children of Joſeph: all which cannot regard any but the Moſt High God, without groſs idolatry.

He is the Angel of the Lord who appeared to Moſes at Horeb, "in a flame of fire out of the midſt "of a buſh." He received and required religious worſhip from Moſes. He is called Jehovah, and aſſumes to himſelf the character of *deliverer* of his people, of the God of Abraham. He deſcribes himſelf by that glorious name, "I am that I am," Exod. iii. 14. In his name and authority Moſes dealt with Pharaoh in their deliverance. Him they were to ſerve upon that mountain, upon their coming out of Egypt; "and his merciful good-will," Moſes prays for, towards that people, Deut. xxxiii. 16. All which demonſtrate him to be the Moſt High God †.

* This text, Gen. xxxi. 13. is applied to the perſon of the Son, by Juſt. Mart. page 218. by Novat. c. 27. and Clem Al.

† Ipſe igitur Chriſtus cum Patre *vivorum eſt Deus*, qui locutus eſt Moyſi, qui et Patribus manifeſtatus eſt. Iren. Lib. 4. cap. 5. pag. 232. et Tertul. con. Prax. cap. 16.

Νενοηκατε ὁτι—You have ſeen that the ſame perſon, whom Moſes calls an *Angel*, and who converſed with him in the flame of fire, that very perſon being God, ſignifies to Moſes that himſelf is the God of Abraham. Juſtin. Martyr. Dial. pag. 260.

He demanded and received divine worship from Joshua; and received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering from Manoah and his wife. He is the Angel that went in the midst of the people in the wilderness, whose glory appeared, and was manifested among them, as the glory of the God of Israel, Josh. v. 14. Exod. xxiii. 20. 21. 22. And he is the Angel of the Lord, who gave the law at Mount Sinai, and who said in his own person *, "I am the Lord thy "God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, "out of the house of bondage," Exod. xix. 20. and xx. 2. Now, if we consider the eminent titles ascribed to the blessed Jesus, the Angel and Messenger of the covenant; the homage and adoration paid him; the unanimous consent of the ancients, both Jews † and Christians, who understood this Angel of the Messiah appearing and acting in his own name and person; and considering, that he that hath any one above him, cannot be said to be God ‡; and that the

* Clement of Alexandria citing Exod. xx. 2. *I am the Lord thy God*, understanding it of Christ, observes particularly, that Christ said this of himself in his own person. Clem. Alex. Pæd. Lib. 1. cap. 7. p. 131. Ed. Ox.

† Angelus, si rem ipsam dicamus, est Angelus Redemptor, de quo scriptum est, quoniam nomen meum in ipso est, ille inquam, *Angelus*, qui ad Jacob dicebat, ego Deus *Bethel*, ille de quo dictum est, Exod. iii. 4. et vocabat Mosen Deus de rubo. Scriptum est enim, Deut. vi. 21. Eduxit vos JEHOVAH ex Ægypto. Et alibi, Num. xx. 6. Misit Angelum suum et eduxit vos ex Ægypto. Præterea scriptum est, Is. lxiii. 9. Et Angelus faciei ejus salvos fecit ipsos. Nimirum ille Angelus, qui est Dei facies, de quo dictum est, Exod. xxxiii. 14. Facies mea præibit, et efficiam ut quiescas. De quo vates, Mal. iii. 1. De quo dictum est.—Nomen meum in eo est. Rabbi Moses, Bar. Nachman. In Exod. xxiii. Ὁυδε αγγελος του Πατρος ὁ Υἱος εστιν, αυτος, Κυριος και Θεος ὢν. Epist. An.

‡ Irenæus saith, That he that hath any one above him, can neither be said to be God, nor a great King.

Son is said to be, and therefore is "God over all *;" and that the apostle expressly declareth, that "because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself:" and further, that his swearing by himself, in the nature of the thing, plainly supposeth, that he had no greater Being to swear by. We must, with irresistable evidence, deduce this conclusion, that he is the supreme Being; the one, true, and Most High God †, as well as the Father.

CONCLUSION.

THE sum, then, of what has been said, and made good by scriptural proof, is, "That our "Lord Jesus Christ is called God," and that in such a manner, as by that name no other can be understood, but the "one only true and supreme God." That "he is the only true God;" because the attributes which belong only to God, (and which are therefore undoubtedly infinite), belong to him also; and the works peculiar to the "only true God," are ascribed to him in scripture as the "efficient cause." That "he is one, true, eternal God with the Fa-"ther," as having the same Godhead or divine nature; as "he is so the only-begotten Son of the Fa-"ther, as to be of the same substance with him, of "glory equal, of majesty co-eternal ‡;" and as he is with the Father one object of faith, religious worship and adoration; "that he is independent and "self-existent, as being Alpha and Omega," before

* Origen in Rom. Lib. 7. Cap. 9. affirms, "That Christ "is God over all;" and adds, "That he that is over all, "has no one above him."

† To say that Christ is God, but not the Most High God, is all one as to say, He is God, but not the Most Holy God, or not the true God, and so to bring him in amongst the number of false gods. Vide Dr Owen Doct. Trin. Vind. p. 42.

‡ Bishop Pearson on the Creed expresseth himself as above, art. 2. page 144.

whom no being existed; as being JEHOVAH, that is, being itself, and the origin of all things; and as being always Son of the Father, who was always Father; and therefore could have no beginning of being, and therefore is a *beginningless Being*. That he is a *necessary Being*, as having all things that the Father hath, all the essential perfections of the Deity, and therefore necessary existence and independence; as being absolutely eternal, and therefore necessarily existent; as being the Creator of the universe, the fountain of all being, and therefore a *necessary Being*. And that "he is the supreme, or Most High God, John iii. 31.; as having no being above him, because "he is above all;" as having religious worship and adoration paid him, by angels and men, by the church militant and triumphant, (as set down with the Father in † his throne), which, in the nature of the thing, and by the holy scriptures, is appropriate to the supreme, or Most High God alone; as a Being so infinitely great, that he could not possibly swear by a greater; wherefore he is the greatest, the supreme Being, God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.

FROM all which, it may, in a natural and easy manner, be deduced, by way of corollary.

THAT these propositions, *viz.* I. That our Lord Jesus Christ is not necessarily existent: that the necessary existence of our Lord Jesus Christ is a thing we know not: that the term *necessary existence* is impertinent, and not to be used in talking of the Tri-

† Mr Johnson, serm. 3. on Christ's domin. p. 36. cites this observation of the learned Mede. "Here are two thrones "mentioned, my throne, says Christ,—glorified saints sit with "him in his throne. But my Father's (*i. e.* God's) throne, is "the power of Divine Majesty."

nity: that the three persons of the Trinity are not to be said to be numerically one in substance or essence: that the terms *necessary existence*, *supremus Deus*, and the title of the *only true God*, may be taken in a sense that includes the personal property of the Father, and so not belonging to the Son: found relevant and proven against Mr Simpson by the assemblies of this church; are grosly erroneous, contrary to the holy scriptures, and our Confession of Faith, and Catechisms; and, as such, ought to be expressly and particularly condemned. And that, in opposition to these blasphemous errors, the independency, necessary existence, and necessary generation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, should be expressly asserted. And that it ought to be declared by this church, that the terms *necessary existence*, *supreme*, *or Most High God*, and the title of the *only true God*, do all equally belong to, and are to be affirmed of the Son and Holy Ghost, as well as of the Father.

II. That the Deity ascribed to the Son in the holy scriptures, carries in it not only bare power and dominion, but all other essential perfections of the Deity: that there must be a great difference between his Deity, which is natural and essential to him, and his Mediatorship which is superadded: and that therefore to ascribe those things to him as God, which are spoken of him as Mediator, and to draw inferences with respect to his Deity, from what relates to his Mediatorial office, is very fallacious, and instead of helping to clear matters, tends to nothing but confusion. And that the Deity ascribed to the Son, in scripture, carries in it an equality to the Father in nature, attributes and perfections, without any inferiority to him in either.

III. That we ought to honour the Son, even as we honour the Father; and reckon we detract from both, when we lessen either. And that we are not to think less honour due to the blessed Spirit, than either to the Father or the Son, since we were as truly and as solemnly devoted to him in our baptism as to either of them. It was a needful caution that was given by Hilary †, one of the earliest Christian writers upon the subject of the Trinity we have now remaining; who, when he was dealing with the Arians, tells us, "That we must take heed, lest, under pretence of honouring the Father, we lessen the glory of the Son."

IV. That we ought earnestly to contend for the doctrine of Christ's true, proper, and supreme Deity, as the most fundamental point of all Christianity. Let any here run into mistakes, and the whole scheme of our religion is presently affected. Let Father and Son be equal, and there is room for a compact. The assuming human flesh will then be an act of the most surprising condescension; and redeeming love will be found to have an ineffable aptness to excite a love in some measure suitable in return. There will be one capable of giving, and another of receiving satisfaction: I mean, such a satisfaction, as is as estimable, in the nature of obedience, as the injury which the great God received was in the nature of contempt. But if men once call Christ's proper Deity into question, they presently run into mistaken notions about his incarnation, and about the whole work of redemption, and quite overturn the doctrine of satisfaction, together with what depends upon it. And if they have low thoughts of the person of Christ, it is

† Hilar. Lib. 1. de Trinit. p. 35.

not to be wondered if they make light of his grace. It is not at all to be expected, that men should have better thoughts of the Holy Spirit than of the Son of God: therefore we need not wonder, that they who stumble at the Son's Deity, are against the Deity of the Holy Ghost too, and quite to seek about his operations, and particularly that sanctifying work of his, that is in the sacred scriptures represented as so absolutely necessary to salvation.

V. That we may, with the greatest security, trust and confide in him by faith, as the great God and our Saviour, expecting eternal life from his hands: for the incarnation of the Son of God; the obedience he performed, and the satisfaction he made in a public capacity, have tended to, and issued in an entire vindication of the glory of all the divine attributes. What more could justice require, or mercy bestow, than the only-begotten Son of God? What greater love could God show to sinners, than by providing? what greater hatred to sin, than by demanding a sacrifice of such infinite value? How gloriously does the divine wisdom appear, in bringing about the most noble end, the glory of God, and the salvation of men, by the most opposite means, in human appearance, the humiliation of the Son of God? What an unfathomable depth of wisdom did it require, to find out an expedient to punish sin, and at the same time pardon the sinner; and so reconcile infinite mercy with inflexible justice? Our thoughts are quite swallowed up in this unfathomable mystery. For, that wretched man should sin against his Maker, and the Creator of all things, take upon him the sinner's punishment: that God the Father should give his co-eternal and consubstantial Son for the redemption of his apostate creatures: that God the

Son should freely offer himself a ransom, and voluntarily undergo the full stroke of divine vengeance due to an elect world; that the great and mighty God should bow the heavens and come down, and veil himself in a tabernacle of flesh: that the Ancient of days should become an Infant of days, should be subject to all the miseries and infirmities of human life, and at last to suffer a most painful and accursed death. What a miracle of love and condescension is here! Did we not believe the proper Deity of the Son, this would make the whole such a dark mystery, as would serve only to eclipse the glory of the divine perfections, and lessen our gratitude to our God and Saviour. But when we consider Christ, as perfect God, and perfect man, substantially united in one person; this fills us with awful and worthy apprehensions of God, in this, the chiefest of all his works, this adorable dispensation. This doth shew such an excellency and dignity in the person of the Mediator, as will assure us of an infinite efficacy in his actions, and value in his sufferings. Seeing by every sin we have offended God, who is of infinite eminency, according unto which the injury is aggravated; how shall we ever be secure of our reconciliation unto God, except the person, who hath undertaken to make the reparation, be of the same infinite dignity; so as the honour, rendered by his obedience, may prove proportionable to the offence, and that dishonour which arose from our disobedience? This scruple is no otherwise to be satisfied, than by a belief in such a Mediator, as is the only-begotten Son of God, of the same substance with the Father, and consequently of the same power and dignity with the God, whom, by our sins, we have offended.

Let it therefore be our earnest request, when we

are looking upward with the greatest seriousness, that we may, by faith, be implanted into Christ Jesus, who is the Author, Purchaser, and Donor of eternal life; and who therefore, and upon that account, necessarily must be the true God. And let it be our daily study, by new supplies of his grace, "to live "to him who died for us, that we which live, should "not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him "who died for us, and rose again."

Now, to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons, and one God, be ascribed, in all churches of the saints, all honour and glory, adoration and thanksgiving, now and for evermore. Amen.

An ENQUIRY into the PRINCIPLE, RULE, and END of MORAL ACTIONS.

WHEREIN

The Scheme of *Selfish Love*, laid down by Mr ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in St Andrews, in his *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue*, is examined, and the received Doctrine is vindicated.

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their ownselves.— Heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, 2 Tim. iii. 1. 2. 4.

INTRODUCTION.

THE present modish turn of religion, looks as if we began to think that we have no need of a Mediator, but that all our concerns were to be managed with God, as an absolute God. The religion of nature makes up the darling topics of our age; and the religion of Jesus is valued only for the sake of that, and only so far as it carries on the light of nature, and is a bare improvement of that light. All that is peculiar to the Christian religion, and every thing concerning Christ, that has not its apparent foundation in natural light, or that goes beyond its principles, is waved, and banished, and despised by too many: and even moral duties themselves, which are essential to the very being of Christianity, are ha-

rangued upon, without any reference to Christ; are placed in his room, and urged upon principles, and with views, ineffectual to secure their practice; and more suited to the sentiments and temper of a Heathen, than of those who take the whole of their religion from Christ.

And the sufficiency of the light of nature is warmly contended for, by such as do not profess to reject revelation; and most of the doctrines of scripture have been given up by some, who yet declare that the Bible is their religion. It is therefore necessary to stand up for the honour of the great God, against those who set their imperfect reason, and proud conceits, above infinite wisdom.

The reader may judge for himself, how far Mr Campbell has adopted these modish principles: and that he may have a view of the scheme of principles, which he has propagated with so much zeal and industry, I shall transcribe the propositions he endeavours to confirm in his writings lately published, in the terms in which he has thought fit to express himself: and shall at present only take notice of such propositions as express his sentiments, concerning what he calls natural religion.

In his *discourse*, proving that the apostles were no enthusiasts, and in his *preface* thereto prefixed, he lays down the following principles: *viz.* That "the "laws of nature (*i. e.* natural religion) are, in them-"selves, a certain and sufficient rule to direct rational "minds to happiness *;" and that "supernatural "light is however *necessary* or *fit* to give them suffi-"cient information of the law of nature, in its full-

* Preface, p. 6.

" compass and latitude, and of all things that are ne-
" ceſſary to work upon their paſſions, in order to en-
" gage them to obſerve it carefully *." That " our
" obſerving of the law of nature, is the great mean
" or inſtrument of our real and laſting felicity †."
And that " men may very well, in a natural courſe
" and ſeries of things, attain ſuch manifeſtations of
" the nature and excellencies of God, as are ne-
" ceſſary to engage them to love and admire him,
" without any more immediate interpoſing of the
" Divinity, than there is when a man opens his eyes,
" and beholds the ſun at noon-day, and feels an
" agreeable warmth ſpreading itſelf through his
" whole body ‡."

He proceeds, in another ‖ diſcourſe, to give us a more full account of his opinion; in which he tells us, in the firſt place, that he agrees with the author of *Chriſtianity as old as the creation*, in thinking, " that natural religion ſtands on theſe natural prin-
" ciples, as its peculiar foundations; namely, that God
" is, and governs the world by his providence: that
" the ſoul is immortal; and that all men, of whatſo-
" ever condition, ſhall be rewarded or puniſhed in
" the next life after this §." He adds, in the ſame place, that " the law, or religion of nature, conſiſts
" in theſe duties, which, becauſe they are founded
" on, and derived from nature, we are obliged to pay
" to God and men: and all which duties, he ſays, we
" are to perform to this end, that we may recommend
" ourſelves to God; and that, having ſpent our
" whole lives in a careful obſervance of them, we

* Preface, p. 7. † Ibid. p. 6. ‡ Diſcourſe, p. 1. 2. ‖ Oratio de vanitate luminis naturæ. § Ibid. p. 4. 5.

" may attain everlasting life with God in heaven." And, in the following page, he gives it as his opinion, that " all the welfare and happiness of rational minds " is comprehended in the duties of natural religion."

And that he may shew, that however natural religion is a *sufficient* rule to direct mankind to happiness, yet revelation is *fit* or *necessary* to give them sufficient information of the law of nature, in its full compass and latitude. He attempts to prove, in this discourse, " that men, by the mere light of nature, " without revelation or tradition, are not able to ar- " rive at the knowledge of the being and existence " of God, and of the immortality of the soul *."

Since these discourses were set abroad into the world, he has published a new edition of his *Enquiry into the original of moral virtue.*

In this treatise, he takes in all these natural principles, upon which he asserts, in his former discourse, that natural religion stands as its peculiar foundations; namely, that God is, and governs the world by his providence: that the soul is immortal; and that all men, of whatsoever condition, shall be rewarded or punished in the next life after this †. And from his supposed leading principle of *self-love*, he derives all acts of piety towards God, and of justice and charity towards men ‡. So that we have here a complete system of natural religion, which Mr Campbell has composed, by the assistance of revelation or tradition; and which he has declared, both in this, and in his other performances, to be sufficient to entail upon us,

* Oratio de vanitate luminis naturæ, p. 26. 27 32.

† Enquiry into the original of moral virtue, p. 63. 79.

‡ Ibid. p. 111. 124.

if duly observed, both real and lasting felicity, in recommending ourselves to the favour of God, and attaining everlasting life with him in heaven.

I HAVE formerly made some reflections on his first two discourses; and seeing he has, in a Christian society, and though clothed with a sacred character, taken it upon him to recommend to the world a visionary scheme of his own, as sufficient, if practised, to entitle mankind to future and lasting felicity; it is neeessary to examine his sentiments by the scriptures of truth, the only test and infallible standard of faith and manners. It were an unnecessary labour to trace him in all the periods of such a verbose discourse; which, however, might be so managed, as to expose every particular branch of his hypothesis to the just resentment of every sober mind, were it worth either the reader's while, or mine, to employ ourselves in such a manner. I shall therefore confine myself to these few things, as the subject of the following sections. *1mo*, To shew that self-love is not, nor ought to be, the leading principle of moral virtue. *2do*, That self-interest, or pleasure, is not the only standard by which we can, and should judge of the virtue of our own, and others actions. And actions are not to be called virtuous, on account of their correspondency to self-interest. And, *3tio*, That self-love, as it exerts itself in the desire of universal unlimited esteem, ought not to be the great commanding motive to virtuous actions: nor is the obtaining the good-liking and esteem of those beings, among whom we are mixed, to be our main end in pursuing them. And this will be sufficient to answer my design, which is to vindicate the truths of God, against the principles laid down in his scheme of selfish love.

SECTION I.

Wherein it is made appear, that self-love is not, nor ought to be, the leading principle of Moral Virtue.

OUR Author tells us, "That it is very certain, that all men have implanted in their "nature a principle of self-love or preservation, "that irresistibly operates upon us in all instances "whatsoever; and is the great cause, or the first "spring of all our several motions and actions, which-"way soever they may happen to be directed *:" that "self-love lies always at the bottom of every "rational mind, and is universally the first spring "that awakes her powers, and begins her motions, "and carries her on to action †." He adds, "When "you apprehend the Deity under these ideas, that "promise you so much advantage, so as to refuse to "worship him, unless he presents himself thus favour-"ably inclined to your interest, and studious of your "happiness; pray, what is the generous principle "that determines you? I see nothing here that has "the least semblance of your being disinterested. "Give me leave to say, this is a sufficient demon-"stration to me; and, I suppose, to every body else; "that, even in matters of devotion, you are absolute-"ly governed by self-interest ‡." And elsewhere ‖, he inserts on the margin a citation from Arrian, in which he brings him in, saying, *That when the gods appear to cross us, and mar our self-interest, we throw down their image-houses, and burn their temples:* and he expressly says, in that place, "that he owns every "thing in that citation, as his principles." Having

* Enquiry into the original of Moral Virtue, p. 4. † Ibid. p. 101. ‡ Ibid. p. 460. ‖ Ibid. p. 454, 455.

thus represented our Author's sentiments, in this particular, in his own words, which he attempts to establish, in his prolix and verbose performance, I shall next proceed to fix the true state of the question.

As to which it may be noticed, that the question is not, Whether self-interest be a motive of our obedience to God; or of moral virtue, as he calls it? This is owned on all hands. God has implanted in us a principle of self-preservation; and we may laudably have a respect to the recompence of the reward. But the question is, Whether self-love be the first spring, and leading principle of virtuous actions? and, Whether self-interest be the highest motive of our obedience to God? Mr Campbell holds the affirmative, and I the negative, in the present question.

And here I must likewise observe, That though Mr Campbell begs his reader not to regard him, as either Jew or Christian, but as some Heathen philosopher; yet we must in charity think, that the principles maintained in this book are truly his sentiments; and, in his opinion, agreeable to all the principles of religion, whether natural or revealed; unless we are to suppose him to believe, and to propagate, with a great deal of industry, "a scheme of principles "directly opposite to his Christian creed."

And it is evident, from his Preface, that he recommends Moral Philosophy as that which ought to be the main study of a Christian divine, next to the holy scriptures; and pretends, that it is the great, and chief business of ministers, to preach † it to their

† Preface to his enquiry, p. 22. 23.

people. And seeing he has composed a system of this kind, and expresses a fond concern for its being valued at an high rate by all who shall peruse it; we must conclude, that it is very proper for the students, in his opinion, to form themselves upon this performance; and to make it their main work, when they shall happen to be invested with a sacred character, to preach this system of morality to those under their charge and inspection. All which, with what I have observed in the introduction, gives sufficient ground to call it immediately to the bar of the sacred oracles; and, according as it is found to agree to that infallible standard, let a judgment be formed about it.

I BEGIN, with endeavouring to show, in this section, 1. That a pretence to make self-love, interest, and pleasure, the first spring and principle of Moral Virtue, is condemned by the holy scriptures, which set our obedience to God upon a quite other foundation. 2. That this notion of the first rise of Moral Virtue is contrary to the plainest principles of reason. And, 3. That it has no manner of countenance from the writings of the more judicious and thinking part of the Heathen philosophers, who have expressed quite other sentiments upon this subject.

I. IF we consult the sacred records upon this question, we are assured from them, that the Holy Spirit doth renew our natures by regenerating grace; and that this new nature is the principle of all holy and spiritual actions: which might be illustrated and confirmed at great length, from John iii. 6. 2 Cor. v. 17. 2 Pet. i. 4. Jer. xxiv. 7. and xxxi. 33.

And what true virtue can we reasonably expect to find among mankind, in their present circumstances of sin and guilt? If we pay a due regard to divine revelation, we must believe that the apostle Paul gives a just character of them; when he tells us, that they cannot please God; that they are alienated from the Author of their being, through their blindness of mind, and enmity of heart; and are indisposed for living to his glory, as their end, and for moving to the enjoyment of him, as the centre of their happiness. From which it is very manifest, that whatever external conformity the actions of men, in an unregenerate state, may carry to the letter of the law; and however useful they may be different ways to the persons themselves, and promote the good of society; yet they can neither be acceptable to God, nor recommend men to his favour; as Mr Campbell has confidently alledged upon this argument. See Rom. viii. 7. 8. Eph. iv. 18. Prov. xxi. 17.

And God himself has declared it to be his method of proceeding with us in the new covenant, that he giveth us new hearts, and writeth his laws in them: and that the effect of this internal change shall be, our walking in his statutes, and our keeping his judgments, and doing them, Ezek. xxxvi. 26.: that is, We shall reform our lives, and yield all holy obedience unto God.

And we know, from the sacred oracles, that Adam, the first man, was created in the image of God, before he had done any good action, or was capable of performing it. And we are likewise assured, from the scripture, that mankind, in their present lapsed state, are destitute of the image of God, which consisted in the rectitude of the whole soul, and in the

powers and abilities that were neceſſary to enable them for that obedience God required of them. From which it is certain, according to the ſaying of our Lord and Saviour, "A corrupt tree cannot bring "forth good fruit." That before men, in their preſent ſtate of ſin and guilt, can perform actions acceptable to God, a new principle of ſpiritual life muſt be infuſed into their ſouls by the divine Spirit; which, in the nature of the thing, muſt be a principle and ſpring of action of a very different nature from the corrupt ſelf-love of mankind in their preſent ſituation.

THOUGH it can be demonſtrated, that ſelf-love neither was, nor could have been the leading principle of Moral Virtue, according to the original frame of human nature; yet it were idle to digreſs to a queſtion that cannot be in the field, as matters now ſtand. I hope Mr Campbell's ſyſtem of Moral Philoſophy is compoſed for the benefit of mankind in their preſent circumſtances; and, as ſuch, recommended by him to the ſtudents: otherwiſe his labour had been beſtowed upon it to no valuable end whatſoever, and the performance itſelf had been a mere amuſement, and nothing elſe. No; this is by no means the caſe. Our author has ſaid it in the plaineſt terms †, "That, by performing the duties of "natural religion, we are recommended to the fa"vour of God; that, having ſpent our lives in the "obſervance of them, we may attain everlaſting life "with him in heaven:" and that, "all the welfare "and happineſs of rational minds is comprehended "in the duties of natural religion." And theſe opinions he delivers in his diſcourſe, deſigned for the refu-

† Oratio, &c. p. 4. 5.

sation of the Deists, who contend for the sufficiency of natural religion, in the present situation of mankind.

I AM not to canvass Mr Campbell's sentiments as to this article of the Christian creed, whether he believes mankind to be in a state of guilt and universal corruption or not: it no-way affects my argument. I have elsewhere proved it from the holy scriptures †, that they are in a state of entire depravation; and this, as has been there observed, has been acknowledged by the wisest among the Heathen, and by the Deists themselves. It being therefore certain, that the self-love of mankind, in their present circumstances, is corrupted and depraved; it can with no shew of reason be pretended, that a vitious, inordinate passion, can possibly be the first spring and principle of all virtuous actions.

IF Mr Campbell pretend, that it is not a vitious self-love, but self-love duly qualified, as having a chief regard to God, as the Head of the human society, that is, the principle of moral virtue; then he must acknowledge, that our love is either virtuous or vitious, according as God is preferred to the creature, and every thing besides himself; which is the same, as to say, that supreme love to God is the first principle of Moral Virtue; which is an opinion I do not oppose. Or his meaning must be: That it is upon the account of our own self-interest, and not for the divine excellency and authority, that a chief regard is to be had to the Head of the human society: and, if this is the case, then, according to him, the morality of the love proceeds from an higher regard to self-interest, than to God himself; and the infinite

† A review and examination of Mr Campbell's principles, &c.

God may be made a subordinate mean to self and self-interest: which is the opinion I contend against, and maintain, that self-love, considered in this view, is a most vitious and inordinate passion, and cannot possibly be the principle of any virtuous action whatsoever.

But, to proceed: The morality which Mr Campbell would have the students of divinity instructed in, that, in imitation of him, they may preach it in Christian congregations, being Moral Philosophy; it must be such a kind of moral virtue, as bears no relation to Christ, and the grace and operations of the divine Spirit: for all are agreed, that philosophy, or the bare light of nature, doth not present moral virtue in this view: and, if he had taken up Moral Virtue in this light, it cannot reasonably be accounted for, that in so large a treatise, he should not so much as have once attempted to shew the defects of philosophical morality, and its difference from gospel-obedience, that the students, as well as others, might not be led into pernicious mistakes.

But Christian morality, in my opinion, has only the just claim to be preached in Christian congregations. It proceeds from a regenerating work of the divine Spirit, which is altogether unknown in philosophical morality: and it is likewise the fruit of Christ's purchase and merit. Hence our Lord says, "For their sakes I sanctify myself; that they may be "sanctified through the truth," John xvii. 19. He prevails for the communication of it, by his intercession within the vail: "Sanctify them through thy "truth: thy word is truth, John xvii. 17. And the gospel of Christ, with the Moral Law ingrafted into it, is the rule and measure of our obedience, and holy

walking with God. The Moral Law, or the Law of Nature, in its full compass and latitude, as it is contained in the word, was the *rule of original holiness* and *obedience*: but it is not the adequate rule of that holiness whereunto we are restored by Christ. The *law of nature*, in its greatest latitude, cannot reveal Christ, nor these treasures of grace that are in him, for enabling us, by daily communications of light and life from him, to "perfect holiness in the fear of "God:" nor can it direct to faith in him, which is the first spring of all virtuous actions; and, as such, is celebrated by the apostle Paul, at great length, in the 11th chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews.

The obedience that is accepted with God, is the obedience of faith, Rom. i. 5. Heb. xi. 6.: thence it springs; and therewith it is animated. Our Lord Jesus Christ affirms, that men are sanctified by the faith that is in him, Acts xxvi. 18. From which it is plain, that there is no other way to attain to that holiness, by which we are made meet for the possession of the inheritance of the saints in light, seeing it is by faith our hearts are purified, and not otherwise; and where the heart is not purified, there can be no obedience acceptable unto God, nor any fellowship with him.

It is the peculiar glory and excellency of Christian morality, and gospel-holiness, that it "is our be-"ing conformed to the image of the Son of God: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predesti-"nate, to be conformed to the image of his Son," Rom. viii. 29. To this end, among others, is he set before us by the gospel, in the holiness of his person, the glory of his graces, the beneficence and usefulness of his conversation in the world; that we may

imitate him, as the great pattern and example of holineſs. As it is a fooliſh imagination, that the only end of his life and death, was to exemplify and confirm his doctrine; ſo to neglect to conſider him, as our example, and, as ſuch, to imitate him, is moſt vile and pernicious. And if Mr Campbell had paid a due regard to the ſcriptures, which only give us a right notion of true morality; and had he kept his eye upon the example of our Lord; that noble pattern of exalted virtue, with that veneration which became him, he had not amuſed the world with his imaginary ſcheme of Philoſophical Morality; and pretended it to be the great and chief buſineſs of miniſters to preach ſuch a ſyſtem to their people: nor would he have talked in the manner he has done, of the noble ſentiments, and heroical actions, of Heathen philoſophers; it being eaſy to ſhew how dim their light was, and that their faireſt virtues were blended with the foulеſt of vices. But we have a Saviour that is full of grace and truth, John i. 4. And certainly we had all the greateſt need of grace and truth. For whatever fond conceits ſome entertain of the ſufficiency of the religion of nature, and value the religion of Jeſus Chriſt only for the ſake of that, and ſo far as it carries on the light of nature: yet it is manifeſt, that the whole human race was miſerably fallen into the deadly darkneſs of iniquity and error; a darkneſs that did ſtill increaſe upon them, and out of which they never could be able to extricate themſelves: for, "when "they knew God, they glorified him not as God, "neither were thankful, but became vain in their "imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkened: "and profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became "fools," Rom. i. 21. 22. This darkneſs every-where had ſpread itſelf through all the earth; as the apoſtle Paul does prove at length, in his epiſtle to the Ro-

means; and as the history of the gospel plainly shews us. It is in Christ alone, that we have a full provision made, for our deliverance out of this wretched state.

And as to our author's celebrated heroes, Socrates and Plato; what the apostle Paul has said of the Heathens, in general, held true of them; "That God "gave such up to uncleanness, through the lusts of "their hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between "themselves, who changed the truth of God into a "lie, and worshipped and served the creature more "than the Creator, who is God, blessed for ever." And these who have considered the broad hints that are given in their writings, of their being under the power of these vile affections, must have less sense than charity, that can regard the apologies some have attempted to make for their vindication. And how noble can we imagine the sentiments of these philosophers to have been, when they conformed themselves to the idolatry and superstition of the country in which they lived? An instance of this we have in Socrates; who, with his last breath, used this mean expression; "Crito, We are indebted a cock to Æscu-"lapius; Offer it, and do not forget."

But further, as Christian morality is the fruit of Christ's purchase and intercession; and as his word is the rule and measure of it, and his example the complete pattern of it: so we are animated to pursue a course of holy and virtuous actions, by daily supplies of grace from Christ, "who is given to be Head o-"ver all things to the church; which is his body," Eph i. 22. It hath been always granted, by such as acknowledge the divine person of the Son of God, that the Lord Jesus is the Head of his church; name-

ly, that he is the Political Head of it in a way of government, and the ſpiritual Head, as to vital influences of grace unto all his members. The church of Rome, indeed, caſt ſome diſturbance on the former, by interpoſing another immediate governing head between him and the catholic church: yet they do not deny, but that the Lord Chriſt is, in his own perſon, the abſolute ſupreme King and Head of the church. The latter is refuſed by the Socinians, and others who go their way, becauſe they deny his divine perſon. But by all others who profeſs the Chriſtian religion, this hath hitherto been acknowledged; and it is moſt evidently expreſſed in ſeveral places of ſcripture. The apoſtle Paul, in his epiſtle to the Epheſians, aſſures us, in the ſtrongeſt expreſſions, that as, in the natural body, there are ſupplies of nouriſhment, and natural ſpirits communicated from the head unto the members; ſo, from Chriſt, the Head of the church; which he is as God-man, there is a ſupply of ſpiritual life made unto every member of his myſtical body. He alſo ſays, "Speaking the "truth in love, may grow up unto him in all things, "which is the Head, even Chriſt: from whom the "whole body fitly joined together, and compacted "by that which every joint ſupplieth, according to "the effectual working, in the meaſure of every part, "maketh increaſe of the body, unto the edifying of "itſelf in love." See 1 Cor. xii. 12. Eph. iv. 15. Col. ii. 19. John xv. and xli. 19. Eph. iv. 15. 16.

And our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath encouraged us to expect and depend upon aſſiſtances of this kind, by his own gracious word of promiſe, "Becauſe I live, "ye ſhall live alſo," John xiv. 19. And he is ſaid to be "our life," Col. iii. 3. And we are ſaid to "re-"ceive out of his fulneſs, and grace for grace," John

ſ. 15. To the ſame purpoſe the apoſtle expreſſeth the matter, "I am crucified with Chriſt; nevertheleſs "I live; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me: and "the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the "faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave "himſelf for me," Gal. ii. 20. "I am crucified "with Chriſt:" that is, as if he had ſaid, The death of Chriſt hath a mortifying influence upon the corruptions of my heart and nature. Chriſt died to expiate ſin; we die to ſin when we mortify it: but adds he, "Nevertheleſs I live; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth "in me: and the life which I live is by the faith of "the Son of God:" that is, I live an holy ſpiritual life: yet I do not lead that life, conſidered in myſelf, and what I am by nature; for my motions are not according to my natural propenſions and inclinations, but Chriſt, by his Spirit, liveth in me, having renewed and changed my heart, and infuſed ſpiritual diſpoſitions into my ſoul; ſo that I am enabled, by a principle of faith, acting upon the Son of God, in his perſon, offices, and mediation, to order my whole converſation, according to the will of God, revealed in his word.

I SHALL not at preſent enlarge upon the relation which Chriſtian morality bears to the Divine Spirit, having given ſome hints in what has been ſaid, and treated, at ſome length, of the neceſſity of regeneration, in a former diſcourſe.

YET I cannot but obſerve, upon the whole, that the Philoſophical Morality, recommended by Mr Campbell, is ſomething very foreign to the ſcriptures of truth. Chriſtian Morality, as has been ſhown, bears a relation to Chriſt, and the Divine Spirit: but Philoſophical Morality can have no ſuch reſpect

to these glorious persons of the adorable Trinity, seeing the doctrines concerning their œconomy, in the method of salvation, are peculiar to revealed religion; and are not in the least hinted at by our Author, though a Christian divine, in his whole scheme of Moral Philosophy. Mr Campbell's Philosophical Morality takes its rise from his love to himself: but Christian Morality proceeds from the knowledge and love of God: And his Philosophical Morality springs from a corrupt, inordinate self-love: but Christian Morality proceeds from a new nature, and the image of God restored in the soul of a lapsed creature, by the Holy Spirit in regeneration, and from faith in the Son of God, as its first spring and principle. And seeing the above propositions have been made evident, from the word of God, it will be very manifest to every one that pays a due regard to the sacred oracles, how silly a figure his Moral Philosophy does make, when it is viewed in scripture-light; and that it can never possibly answer the ends proposed by him, of recommending men to the favour of God, and entitling them to future and lasting felicity.

II. But, to proceed: Since Mr Campbell inrols himself among the high pretenders to reason in these days, it will be fit to examine if this, his principle, be agreeable to the common reason of mankind.

It is most agreeable, in my opinion, to all the principles of sound reason, that rational creatures be animated in a course of virtue, by the knowledge and love of the Deity, the great Author of their being, as the leading principle of all their actions. For it is very manifest, that the duty of glorifying God, or celebrating his infinite perfections, is founded in the nature of God, and the relation creatures stand in to the Author of their being: and that it is impossible,

in the nature of the thing, that a reasonable creature, remaining in a state of integrity, can fail to promote this great and noble end of its being and existence; because an holy and innocent creature cannot possibly contemplate infinite wisdom, power, goodness, and holiness, without supreme love and esteem, the most humble adoration, and most accented praises.

Mr Campbell has had the assurance to express himself in a very extravagant manner, maintaining, "That we may refuse to worship God, unless he pre-"sent himself favourably inclined to our interest, and "studious of our happiness." And he tells us elsewhere, "That, by our happiness, he understands fu-"ture and lasting felicity, universal and immortal "fame and renown, and God's expressing his love and "esteem of us, in such instances, as are fully propor-"tionated to our natural principle of self-love †".

This bold assertion, that we are not obliged to worship God, that is, to esteem, love, or obey the great God, unless he conferred upon us an immortal fame and renown, and a future and lasting felicity; had need, I think, to have been well established by solid arguments, when it was confidently published to the world by our Author: for, if he fail in the proof of it, he may be found guilty, of what will be constructed, by all sober minds, to be a reproaching of his Maker, in whose hands his breath is, and to whom he must account for the whole of his conduct. For my part, I see no shadow of proof, either for this, or his other opinions, in all his verbose performance; and therefore, till he produce a claim of right to future and lasting felicity, and to universal and

† Enquiry, *&c.* p. 460. and 76. 83. 86. 94. Preface to his discourse, p. 6.

immortal fame and renown, that is not founded in the voluntary condescension, will, and good pleasure of God: I cannot vindicate him from the charge of having, in this particular, made too free with the great Author of his being and existence.

But, to set this matter in a true light, we may consider, that our worshipping God is a necessary duty, founded upon the precept and law of God, which is an emanation from his holiness, wisdom, and dominion over his creatures: whereas the eternal felicity of a dependent being, is a privilege voluntarily bestowed, and hath its rise in divine goodness or bounty, which is free in its egress. Whosoever will consider the nature of God, and the relation of a creature, cannot, with reason, think, that eternal life is, of itself, due from God, as a recompence to the creature, for its obedience. Who can think so great a reward due, for having performed that, which a creature, in that relation, was obliged to do? God owes nothing to the holiest creature. What he gives is a present from his bounty; not the reward of the creature's merit: "for who hath first given unto him, and it shall be "recompensed to him again?" What obligation could there be from the creature, to confer a goodness on him, to this or that degree, for this or that duration? If he had not created a man or angel, he had done them no wrong; and if he had taken away their being, after a time, when he had answered his end, he had done them no injury *. For what law obliged him to enrich them in that being wherein he had invested them, but his sole goodness and conversation with them.

And, though it is owned, that, in all ages of the world, men have had a strong hankering after im-

* Mr Boyle's excellency of theology, p. 25. 26.

mortality; yet this is only an evidence that God designed that they should exist beyond the grave; but not that they stood entitled to future and lasting felicity, from the nature and relation of things, independently upon his own free purpose and will. For the same power that gave them a being, could have produced them, without any appetite of that nature and kind. And though it was this that gave life and spirit to all the reasonings of the philosophers on this subject, and was itself one of the best arguments of the soul's immortality; yet so conscious were mankind, that a future and lasting state of felicity was a privilege that depended on the divine will, favour, and bounty, that Socrates himself, notwithstanding all the arguments, by which he endeavours to encourage his hopes, speaks doubtfully about it in the very last moments of his life: as might be shown, from his own words, if I could take the time to mark them down in this place.

It is true, we know, from revelation, that God will not deprive any rational creature of its being and existence: but can it be shown to be so inconsistent with his wisdom, that he cannot do it if he will? Though he withdraw that being he has given to some creatures, his power can raise up others of the same, or nobler faculties, to answer the ends of his glory. And none can prove, but it might be agreeable to divine wisdom, in this manner, to manifest his sovereignty over the works of his hands, if God had thought fit to have done so. It cannot be shown, that divine goodness may not possibly stop short of an eternal reward to an innocent creature, and think a less reward sufficient: and, though justice requires, that an innocent creature shall not be punished, by being made miserable; yet it doth not

require, that God shall be obliged to preserve that being necessarily, which he gave freely.

Now, seeing it is very manifest, from what has been said, that the most innocent creature cannot possibly produce a claim to future and lasting felicity, but what is founded upon, and must be resolved into, the pleasure, free-will, and bounty of God; must it not be a strange way of assuming for these, whose foundation is in the dust, and that dwell in houses of clay, to talk at this rate, that they would pay no homage or worship to the great God, if he refused to bestow upon them a future and lasting felicity? And how visionary must that scheme be, which strikes at the first principles of reason, and cannot stand or subsist one moment, but by banishing from among men all veneration and due regard for the Deity.

But, further, I hope Mr Campbell will acknowledge, that himself, and all other men, are now in a lapsed state. If he refuse it, his writings will prove it: Heathen philosophers have acknowledged it; and, the Deists themselves have confessed it. And natural conscience must dictate to every man, that sinful creatures, who are in a lapsed state, have forfeited all title to lasting felicity; and that they are obnoxious to justice, for violating the law of God. This might be confirmed, by a variety of proofs from Pagan writers, as well as illustrated, from the principles of reason itself. And however some may amuse themselves with the notion of God's benevolence, yet this will yield little comfort to a guilty mind: for, as his justice is provoked, right reason, if we attend to it, will convince us, that must be satisfied, the honour of his law vindicated, and his hatred at sin manifested, before goodness is extended to criminal creatures.

And, as the whole writings of Pagan philosophers, notwithstanding the assistances some of them had from revelation, discover their absolute ignorance of the way and method in which God was to be reconciled unto sinners: so this is a plain argument, among others, that the restoring of lapsed man to the favour of God, and to future and lasting felicity, had its rise from grace, and the free will and purpose of God; and that therefore God, if he had thought meet so to do, might have left the guilty race to perish in their sins, without any prospect of future and lasting felicity. And, will our Author take it upon him to say, that if mercy had not interposed in the manner it did, that mankind had been loosed from all obligation to obey their Creator? That man, by his sin, had exempted himself from the government of God? That the precepts and law of God had lost its binding power, because man, by his sin and rebellion, had lost the prospect of future and lasting felicity! and that man, in these circumstances, might have laudably hated, reproached, and blasphemed the Author of his being? These are vile and impious suppositions; and the scheme, from which they follow, must be absurd in itself, and subversive of all the principles of religion, whether natural or revealed.

III. Before I conclude this section, I must examine into the sentiments of our Author's celebrated writers. And, if it be found that he has outdone his Fellow-heathens upon this argument, notwithstanding of his being a Christian divine; I do not well know how he shall answer for it at his next conversation with them.

The noblest sentiments that I can observe to have been delivered by Heathen philosophers upon this subject, are these of Pythagoras, Plato, and some o-

thers †, namely, "That it is our end to be like God; "and that conformity to God is the chief good." And Hierocles, cited by our Author, says, That "virtue being the image of God in a rational soul, as "every image must have a pattern for its subsistence; "so, whatever is acquired as virtuous, must refer to "God, as our great pattern, in the acquisition of virtue; otherwise it is only an imposture, and can have "no value."

Now, if God be considered as our great pattern, and virtue as his image and likeness in a rational soul, it will give us the notion of a quite other principle and end of virtuous actions, than our own self-love, interest, and pleasure: for, if moral virtue is considered in this light, then God's love to himself, and to his creatures, is the great pattern of our love to God, to ourselves, and to our fellow-men. And as it proceeds from the infinite perfection of the Deity, that God loves himself in a supreme manner, and that it is his peculiar glory to do so; so, on the other hand, it proceeds from the finite and limited perfection of a rational creature, and its universal dependence on God, that it ought to love God more than itself. God can love nothing above, or beside himself, and his own glory; because there is nothing good or great, and truly lovely, besides himself. And, for the same reason, his love to his creatures must be for his own sake, and according as some resemblance of that great pattern and standard of beauty and perfection appears in them. Thus, our love to God must be supreme, and for his own sake; that is, for his glorious excellencies and perfections: and our love to ourselves, and fellow-men, must be on God's account, and as the rays of the divine image do appear in them.

† Stanley's lives, page 542.

THIS I acknowledge to be a just sentiment, and a true notion of Moral Virtue. I hope therefore Mr Campbell will agree with me, that we ought to love God for himself, and that in a superlative manner; and that we ought to love our fellow-men for his sake: and that he will not adventure to say it, that he loves himself more than God, and the great God, and every thing else, only for his own sake.

AND as this notion of Moral Virtue is founded in the plain and evident principles of reason; so it follows, by a native and immediate consequence from it, that the knowledge and love of God must be the leading principle of all moral actions: which is the doctrine I do herein maintain and defend.

AND, further, seeing Moral Virtue consists in the imitation of God, he that would express the image of God, must imprint upon his mind the most exalted idea, and the highest esteem possible, of the holiness, purity, and perfection of the divine nature; and thus awaken all the powers of his soul, to be formed to actions, worthy of the infinite Original. And can it be possible, but in so doing, self, and every created being, must sink infinitely low in the view of the man employed in so noble an exercise?

AND can we possibly imitate this great pattern of exalted virtue, without supreme love and admiration of the divine Original? The more adoring thoughts we have of God, the more delightfully we shall aspire to, and catch after any thing that may promote the more full draught of his divine image in our hearts. When the soul is ravished with the contemplation of God's holiness, goodness, justice, righteousness, and truth, it will desire to be like him, more than to have

its own being continued to it; and it will delight in its own being and exiſtence, in order to this heavenly and ſpiritual work. And the impreſſions of the nature of God upon it, and the imitations of the nature of God by it, will be more deſirable than any natural perfection whatſoever.

And if God himſelf be our pattern, he muſt likewiſe be our end. Every man's mind forms itſelf to a likeneſs to that which it makes its chief end. The ſame characters that are upon the thing aimed at, will be imprinted upon the ſpirit of him that aims at it; even as the ambitious man is as vain and elevated as the honour he reaches at. Thus, when God and his glory are made our end, we ſhall find a ſilent likeneſs paſs in upon us; and the beauty of God will, by degrees, enter upon our ſouls.

And, as Plutarch ſaith, God is angry with thoſe that imitate his thunder or lightning, his works of majeſty; but delighted with thoſe that imitate his virtue. So theſe who make ſelf-love the ſpring, centre, and end of all their actions, they ſet themſelves in the temple of God, and lift up themſelves above all that is called God: they confound and overthrow the whole order and nature of things; and they daringly invade the awful regalia of heaven, and react the part of that foul ſpirit, who, by ſuch an impotent attempt, became, of an holy angel, a ghaſtly apoſtate devil.

I Shall only farther obſerve, that our Author has overlooked what Tully † has ſaid on this ſubject, *viz.* "That a due conſideration of the heavenly bodies "muſt lead every thinking man to the knowledge of "God: that, from this knowledge, ſprings piety, with

† De natura Deorum, lib. 2.

" which is connected juſtice, and all the other virtues:" which is the ſame as if he had ſaid, that the knowledge and love of God is the firſt ſpring of all virtuous actions.

And I think he cannot well make it out, that Socrates was animated to purſue a courſe of virtue, from the proſpect of future and laſting felicity, unleſs his higheſt motive to action was ſomething he was very uncertain about; as is evident from his words to his friends, a little before his death: " I would have you " know, ſaid he, that I have great hopes that I am " now going into the company of good men; yet I " would not be too preremptory and confident con- " cerning it *. I am now about to leave this world, " and ye are ſtill to continue in it; which of us " have the better part allotted us, God only knows †."

And however our Author talks of the writings of the Heathen philoſophers, yet I am confident, that, when they are duly conſidered, it will be found that none of them go half-way with him, except what may be made of ſome expreſſions of the demure Stoicks, and the ſtupid ſyſtem of the Epicureans.

Upon the whole, it has been ſhown, that a pretence to make ſelf-love, intereſt, and pleaſure, the firſt ſpring and principle of Moral Virtue, is condemned by the holy ſcriptures, which ſet our obedience to God upon a quite other foundation: that this notion of the firſt riſe of Moral Virtue, is contrary to the plaineſt principles of reaſon; and that it has no manner of countenance from the writings of the more judicious and thinking part of the Heathen philoſophers,

* Plato in Phæd. † Plato in Apol. Socrat.

who have expreſſed quite other ſentiments upon this ſubject.

SECTION II.

That ſelf-intereſt or pleaſure, is not the only ſtandard by which we can, and ſhould judge of the virtue of our own and others actions: and that actions are not to be called virtuous, on account of their correſpondency to ſelf-intereſt.

HAving conſidered what our Author judges to be the firſt ſpring or principle of Moral Virtue, I ſhall now enquire into his ſentiments, concerning the rule or ſtandard of virtuous actions. As to which, he expreſſeth himſelf as follows: "Since ſelf-intereſt "or pleaſure is the only ſtandard by which we can "judge of the virtue, *i. e.* the value or goodneſs of "any action whatſoever, I do not ſee how a ſenſe of "virtue can be antecedent to ideas of advantage. "For my part, I know no one action of any intelli-"gent being, that can be called virtuous on any other "account, than from its correſpondency to ſelf-in-"tereſt, or its fitneſs to promote the happineſs of "one's nature. Thus our actions towards the Deity "are called virtuous, becauſe they are ſuitable to his "ſelf-love. As, on the other hand, the actions of the "Deity towards us are called virtuous, becauſe they "are adapted to the intereſts of human nature *. "If we will conſider all the ſeveral moral qualities "that can be called virtuous, we ſhall find, that "we like and approve thoſe qualities, for no other "reaſon, but for their being good to us; *i. e.* for the "pleaſure they give us, or for their gratifying our "ſelf-love †. The goodneſs of any action done by

* Enquiry into the original of Moral Virtue, p. 389.
† Ibid. p. 357. 358.

" one intelligent mind to another, from which it is " denominated *Moral Virtue*, immediately lies in the " conformity it has to our self-love, while it concurs " and co-operates with this principle, in approving " our being happy, and to secure and promote our " well-being *. But what ideas must we have of " moral goodness? Does this likewise lie, as well as " the other, in pleasure? or does it signify any " thing else? I confess ingenuously, that I neither " have, nor can form any other notion of it. And " I conceive, that this sort of pleasure, or good, is " called moral, because it springs from the *mores*, the " manners, or the affections and actions of intelligent " beings, or rational agents, and to distinguish it " from that kind of pleasure or good, which we have " from inanimate or irrational creatures; though it " might be called natural, with as good reason as any " other sort of pleasure or good whatsoever. One " might subdivide natural goodness into a great ma- " ny particular sorts, which differ fully as much " from one another, as moral goodness can do from " every one of them. If custom would allow of it, " might not one talk of musical-goodness, picture- " goodness, landskip-goodness, &c. thereby under- " standing the pleasures which we have from music, " pictures, landskips, and the like? And do not all " these sorts of natural goodness differ from one an- " other, as much as moral goodness possibly can " do †?" Thus far Mr Campbell.

Before I consider if our Author's opinion be founded upon the principles of sound reason, I shall first enquire into its agreeableness with the holy scriptures; and from them, I think, it will be abundantly

* Enquiry into the original of Moral Virtue, p. 319. 320.
† Ibid. p. 354. 355.

evident, that self-interest or pleasure is not the only standard by which we are to judge of the virtue or goodness of actions; and that the goodness of an action, from which it is denominated *Moral Virtue*, does not immediately lie in the conformity it has to our self-love, while it concurs with this principle, in approving our being happy, and to secure and promote our well-being.

I. For we are assured, from the word of God, that the goodness of an action does immediately lie in the conformity it has to the law of God, and his will therein declared, and its being done, from a respect to the authority of God, the Law-giver. To this purpose, God is said, by his word, and his law and will, therein published, to have "shewed unto us what is "good," Mic. vi. 7. 8. 9. and "to delight in our "obeying his voice; obedience to his will being bet-"ter than sacrifice; and to hearken to him more ac-"ceptable than the fat of lambs," 1 Sam. xv. 22. And that the law of God, revealed in his word, is the adequate and only standard by which the goodness of actions is to be tried, appears, from God's strictly requiring, that nothing be added to it, or taken from it, Deut. iv. 2. and xiii. 32. Prov. xxx. 6. Rev. xxii. 18. And it is certain, that as we are to do only what is commanded; so, whatever we do, we are to do it, because it is commanded, and from a respect to the will and authority of God, manifested in his word; otherwise it is no part of our obedience to God, nor will be regarded by him as such. Hence it is said to be the character of the righteous man, that he endeavours "to keep God's statutes; because he "hath commanded him to keep his precepts diligent-"ly," Psal. cxix. 4. 5. The great God hath enjoined us to order our conversation according to his word,

Pſal. cxix. 9.; and hath remitted us to the "law and "teſtimony," as the only ſtandard of our conduct and actions, and required us to take heed thereto, "as "unto a light that ſhineth in a dark place, till "the day dawn in our hearts," Iſ. viii. 20. 2 Pet. i. 19. And it is affirmed of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who has left us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps, that "he pleaſed not himſelf," Rom. xv. 3. but willingly expoſed himſelf to all his ſufferings, in obedience to his Father's will; and the whole of his obedience, as Mediator, is deſcribed in the glory and perfection of it, from its being performed in obedience to the will and command of God: for, ſaith he, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God," Pſal. xl. 7. 8. And the judicious Dr Owen * has well obſerved, from the parallel text, "That the fun-"damental motive unto the Lord Chriſt, in his "undertaking the work of mediation, was the will "and glory of God." We are obliged to honour the law of God, not principally, becauſe of its uſefulneſs to us, its accommodateneſs to the order of the world, but for its innate purity, as bearing on it an impreſſion of the holineſs of God; and he values no adoration of his creatures, unleſs this attribute be acknowledged: "I will be ſanctified in them that come "near me, and I will be glorified," Lev. x. 3. And ſeeing he formed the rational creature, to manifeſt his holineſs in that law, whereby he was to be governed, we ought not to deprive him of that deſign of his own glory. The law of God is called *holy* and *pure*, Pſal. xix. 8. Rom. vii. 12. as it is a ray of the pure nature of the Law-giver. And our lives are not expreſſive of his holineſs, when we do a thing in the matter agreeable to the rule, if we do it not with a reſpect to the purity of the Law-giver beaming in it.

* Comment. on Heb. x. 7.

For, if we do any thing, chiefly with respect to a design of our own, we make not the holiness and authority of God, discovered in the law, our rule, but our own conveniency or happiness, which we make a god to ourselves. And it is manifest, that if a man makes himself, and his own interest and pleasure, the rule and end of his actions, he prefers the creature before God, and loves it supremely, contrary to the will of God. Thus he invades God's right, refuseth God for his God and Lord, and sets up himself as his own governor, and affects virtually an equality with God, and independency on him; which is that daring crime of the devil, who sinned from the beginning. I might multiply scripture-texts to illustrate this subject. But having elsewhere made it appear, that the law of nature is insufficient to direct mankind to happiness, and that the scripture alone, in which the law and will of God is revealed, are the infallible standard of the whole duty of man; I shall not at present enlarge, at any great length, upon this argument.

But, further, Mr Campbell says, "That the goodness of any action, from which it is denominated "*Moral Virtue*, lies in the conformity it has to our "self love; and that there is no difference betwixt "natural goodness and moral goodness." But I doubt not to affirm, that an action is not denominated virtuous, from its conformity to our self-love, but from the conformity it has to the law of God.

We are assured by the apostle Paul, that the remains of the law of nature upon the minds of the Gentiles, who had not the written law, were the standard by which they were to judge of the virtue of their actions; and that the will of God, revealed

in his word, was the rule and measure, according to which these, who had the advantage of revealed religion, were to behave in all their actions; and that their actions were to be tried and judged, good or bad, at the judgment-seat of Christ, according to their conformity unto, or disagreement from the written word, or light of nature, Rom. ii. 12. 13. 14. "For "as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in "the law, shall be judged by the law: (for not the "hearers of the law are just before God, but the "doers of the law shall be justified. For when the "Gentiles, which have not the law, do, by nature, the "things contained in the law, these having not the "law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the "work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the "meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another). "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of "men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel."

The scope of the apostle is to shew, that neither Jew nor Gentile can be justified by the works of the law. And, to illustrate the argument, he lays down what is requisite to justification, according to the tenor of the covenant of works; and that is, to fulfil perfectly whatever is written in the law, and to persevere in a course of perfect obedience. "For not "the hearers of the law are just before God, but the "doers of the law shall be justified." Though Mr Campbell, then, shall suppose himself as innocent as Adam was in his primitive state, he cannot recommend himself to the favour of God, upon the footing of promoting his self-interest, but upon his entire conformity, in heart and life, to the law of God, and his subjection to the authority of God interposed

therein. And however his conscience may acquit him, merely upon his acting a part agreeable enough to his own self-interest, yet his Fellow-heathens had (in this particular, I acknowledge) more noble sentiments; for their consciences accused or excused them, according as their actions were agreeable or not "to "the law of God written in their hearts." And, by this law, written in their hearts, we must understand the first principles of right reason, in a due exercise of which, a thinking man must deduce some of the first rules of veneration for the Deity, and of equity to men. And because this law contained some faint draught of the written law, and instructed them what to do and avoid, in many instances, which is the great property of a law, they are therefore said "to do, by "nature, the things contained in the law," and to be "a law unto themselves:" that is, they had some remains of that law in their hearts, which was inscribed, in full characters, upon the mind of man, at his creation, and were directed by it, in many instances, what they ought to do or avoid.

And as the terms in which sin is described in scripture, such as חטאה, פשע, עון, ἀνομία παραχοὴ, rebellion and disobedience, Is. i. 2. Rom. v. 19. discover the nature of it to consist in its disagreement to the law and will of God, therein declared; so the apostle John expressly asserts, that sin is "the transgression of the "law," 1 John iii. 4. From which it is very manifest, that the law of God is the great and only standard of virtue, and that the virtue of our actions does immediately lie, not in their conformity to our self-love, but in their conformity to the law and will of God.

II. But to proceed to enquire if this opinion be

founded upon the principles of reason, we may observe, that to make self-interest or pleasure the only standard of virtue, and to pretend that no action can be called virtuous, on any other account than its correspondency to self-interest, is plainly to destroy all virtue, and to make our own self-love the only ground and reason of our owing any love to God, or our fellow-creatures. Can it be agreeable to the nature of things to say, that reasonable creatures owe no esteem, love, and subjection to God, for what he is in himself, but only for what he does, to gratify their self-love? Nothing but Deity can be the formal cause and foundation of divine worship, which is an ascribing infinite perfection to the object, and a giving that love, trust, and esteem, that is proper and peculiar to God: and therefore our love to God, and our universal subjection unto him, must, in the nature of the thing, be founded upon what God is in himself, and not chiefly upon what he hath done for us; which is the fruit of mere pleasure and bounty. And none of our actions can be called virtuous, but so far as they are done in obedience to him, and are agreeable to his will and law: for, as it is highly reasonable, that an infinitely-perfect Being should prescribe a rule of action to his creatures; so they do not act agreeably to the rational faculties with which they are endowed, if their love to him is not supreme: and if, in all instances, they do not express the sense they have of their dependence upon him, and his authority over them, and a due esteem and veneration for the great God, who infinitely excels every thing else.

Our Author has the assurance to say, That the actions of the Deity towards us are called virtuous, because they are adapted to the interest of human nature. But I thought that they had been holy, great,

and like himself, because agreeable to his own nature and will. All who acknowledge the being and perfections of God, must own, that God is not regulated by any law, without or beside himself. He is his own law and rule; and all his actions whatsoever are necessarily holy and good, because agreeable to his own nature, will, and perfections; and it cannot be imagined, that he is astricted to, and governed by, a rule inferior to himself. Can Mr Campbell deny, that God is of "purer eyes than to behold evil," and that "he hateth all the workers of iniquity?" Can he refuse it, that this is an holy, or, as he stiles it, a virtuous action? And can he make it appear that it is such, because it is adapted to the interest of a sinful creature, and tends to promote its happiness? It must be acknowledged to be highly dishonourable to the great God, when men pay no regard either to reason or revelation, in talking of the Deity; but imagine him to be such an one as themselves, and make a visionary hypothesis of their own, the measure and rule of their sentiments about him!

If we consider this scheme, it is certain, that, according to it, the creature's self-interest is made the sole and only paramount law, and the measure of right and wrong, and God is confined to act by it, as much as these he has created. And this is the same as to say, that man is not accountable to his Creator, and that God has no authority to prescribe such laws to his creatures, as shall oblige them, dutifully, to acknowledge his sovereignty over them, and their entire dependence upon him. For, according to this scheme, he can prescribe nothing unto them, but what self-interest must direct them unto, though they depended no way upon him, and although he had no authority over them. And every man himself, it seems, is to be his own judge, whether he

has answered the end of his creation, by promoting his own happiness, or not. If he has failed of it, he bears the loss of his own bad management; but is not otherwise accountable to the Most High for breaking his laws. And what doth all this amount to, but to suppose the living God to be an indolent Being, as Epicurus has represented him, not minding what these, who are the product of his hands, do, in contempt of his authority!

It is owned, that the duties prescribed to us by God, when rightly performed, do tend to promote our welfare and happiness. But to make our own happiness the standard of duty, and to say that the actions of the Deity towards us are called virtuous, because they are adapted to our interest, is to reproach the Author of our being. For, is not God blasphemed and reproached, when that, which is peculiar to God, is ascribed to creatures? And is not this done, when it is maintained, that creatures are to act for themselves as their last end; and that their own interest and pleasure is the measure and rule of their actions, and not the will and law of God? Is not this to make creatures, and their own interest and pleasure, as absolutely the rule of their actions, as if there was not a God to rule over them, as if they had received nothing from him, and were no way accountable to him, but as they had done well for themselves, in promoting their own interest, pleasure, and happiness? Mr Campbell could not bear it well, we see, from his preface to this edition of his enquiry, that Dr Innes should have the praise of this fine performance, as he took it to be! And how shall the Author of our being take it, if poor creatures arrogate to themselves the praise of what they have received from him, and sacrifice to their own net,

and burn incenſe to their own drag? Can they expect, but that, as God, by the prophet, has threatned, they ſhall lie down in ſorrow?

Our Author tells us, that God, and all other intelligent beings, are univerſally governed by one common principle of ſelf-love. But can it be agreeable to reaſon itſelf, and the nature of things, to maintain, that intelligent creatures have as good reaſon to love themſeves, for their own intrinſic goodneſs, as God has to love himſelf on that account; or that they have as good a right to act univerſally, and only from love to themſelves, as God has to act only from love to himſelf? And ſeeing, as has been ſhown, and ſhall be further illuſtrated in the ſequel, it is the peculiar and incommunicable glory of the great God, reſulting from the infinite perfection of his nature, to act from ſupreme love to himſelf, and for himſelf, as his ultimate end; muſt not an attempt to ſet this important matter in a falſe light, and to inveſt poor creatures with the regalia of heaven, be moſt injurious unto the honour of God, and the ready way to betray unthinking men into miſtakes, moſt deſtructive and pernicious to themſelves?

Mr Puffendorff, who may be allowed to have been as good a judge of the common reaſon of mankind, as the high pretenders to reaſon in our times, ſays, "We call that a good action which is conformable to the law, as an ill one is that which is "not conformable to it †." He adds elſewhere, as follows: "Since, to the goodneſs of an action, it is "not enough to do what the law enjoins, but to do "it alſo with ſuch an intention as is agreeable to

† Puffendorff's law of nature, &c. by Spavan, chap. 7. p. 8.

" that law; an action cannot be deemed perfectly " good, unless it exactly, and in all its parts, answer " the prescription; and unless the only motive that " influenced the agent, was his desire of paying the " legislator a prompt and ready obedience *." He likewise tells us, " That God, by his right of crea- " tion, has the power of prescribing bounds to that " liberty of will he has been pleased to indulge man- " kind †;" and that, " seeing moral goodness and " turpitude are affections of human deeds, arising " from their agreeableness or disagreeableness to a " rule or a law; and since a law is the command of a " superior, it does not appear how we can conceive " any goodness and turpitude before all law, and " without the institution of some superior: and tru- " ly, as for those who would establish an eternal rule, " for the morality of human actions, independent of " a divine institution, the result of their endeavours " seems to us to be the joining with God Almighty, " some co-eval extrinsic principle, which he was ob- " liged to follow, in assigning the forms and essences " of things ‡." Thus far this Author.

But, to proceed: It has been shewn elsewhere ‖, that it is the first principle of the law of nature, that there is a God, who governs all things. And it may, from the same, and like arguments, be demonstrated to be the leading principle of natural religion, that as the dictates of our reason are so many laws, made known to us by God; so it is his will, that we walk according to the information of that light which is born with us; and that if we walk contrary to it, we violate his law, and contemn his

* Puffendorff's law of nature, *&c.* [by Spavan, chap. 7. p. 92. 93. † Ibid. p. 3. ‡ Ibid. p. 20. ‖ Review, *&c.*

authority. From which it follows, that the goodneſs of our actions lies in their conformity to the law and will of God, and not in their conformity to our ſelf-love, pleaſure, and advantage.

And it is moſt certain, that however men may pay a regard to ſome of the laws of nature, from a proſpect of their intereſt in ſo doing, as we follow a phyſician's preſcription for our health, who has no authority over us; yet they cannot obſerve them as laws, becauſe every law neceſſarily implies a ſuperior; and that ſuch an one has actually taken upon him to govern and direct his inferiors.

And our Author, who magnifies the law of nature, and beſtows ſuch great encomiums upon it, muſt either be of opinion, that the law of nature doth ſubject mankind to the authority of God, or that it does not: if it does not, then God has no authority over the works of his hands; and they are no more accountable to him, than if they were independent of him, and had received neither being nor exiſtence from him; which is an opinion ſo black, that I forbear to give it a name. But if he acknowledge that mankind, by the law of nature, are ſubjected to the authority of God, then it muſt be owned, that it is God's authority only that makes the law of nature to be a law, and its binding force, is not from the fitneſs of what is preſcribed by it, to promote pleaſure and ſelf-intereſt, but from the authority of God ſtamped upon it. And hence the nature of Moral Virtue muſt lie, not in the fitneſs of the action, to promote pleaſure and happineſs, but in its agreeableneſs to the will of God, declared in his law.

Our Author's ſcheme ſeems likewiſe to expoſe him to the neceſſity of allowing ſome degree of Mo-

ral Virtue to brutes. And, although there is no reason to doubt but brutes, as they are capable of being treated by us either mercifully or cruelly, may be the objects either of virtue or vice; yet, to maintain that they may be the subjects of virtue, must be wild and extravagant.

But if the agreeableness of an action, to promote the pleasure and happiness of the agent, be the true notion of virtue, it were unreasonable to refuse that brutes are virtuous; seeing they manifestly pursue their own pleasure and happiness, in a great variety of actions, and do follow the instincts and impulses of nature more steadily and regularly than men. And if a consciousness of the moral goodness of actions, in their conformity to the divine law and will, be not required to constitute these actions virtuous, what is there wanting to render many of theirs truly such?

What a moral agent primarily proposes, is to act reasonably, and according to the law and will of God, made known to him either by the word of God among us Christians, or by the dictates of reason, and principles of natural religion, among such as are not enlightened from above. But to act from an impulse to what is pleasing, or a natural good, has always been reckoned a leading principle only among sensible agents, destitute of reason and reflection; and therefore incapable to be moved from any other spring of action. And therefore, to make pleasure of any kind the end of a moral agent, must be as absurd as to make truth or virtue the end of a sensible agent.

And our Author, to complete his scheme, has thought fit to reject the distinction betwixt *bonum*

honeſtum, and *bonum utile et jucundum*, which has been maintained by ſome of the moſt judicious of the Heathen philoſophers: and he tells us frankly, that muſical-goodneſs and landſkip-goodneſs differ from one another, as much as moral goodneſs poſſibly can do from either. Thus the morality of our actions, according to him, have no relation to the law, will, or authority of God; but our intereſt or pleaſure is the rule and meaſure of all things: and there is no difference betwixt devotion-goodneſs and landſkip-goodneſs; our love to God, and our love to a fine houſe or garden: and there is no difference betwixt the devotions and ſervices of the angelical tribe, and the goodneſs of Mr Campbell's action, in looking at, or riding a fine horſe, but juſt as Mr Campbell's pleaſure is greater or leſs in degree than theirs!

I SUPPOSE that no thinking man will judge it worth while to enlarge in refuting ſuch extravagant tenets. I ſhall only tell our Author, that, by reſolving all obligations into pleaſure, and natural good, he has denied that virtue is good in itſelf, and affirmed it to be no otherwiſe good, than as it does us good. Whereas, it is certainly ſelf-amiable and ſelf-worthy, and deſerves our approbation and choice. And, upon the ſame ground, he has likewiſe denied, that there can be any ſuch thing as an intrinſic preferableneſs of one action to another, more than of one colour to another. Every agent well knows what actions pleaſe him, and which diſpleaſe him; but in themſelves, according to this ſcheme, they are all equally valuable, or rather equally worthleſs.

BUT however our Author may amuſe himſelf with theſe ſpeculations, it is a thing moſt certain, that the

communication of natural good is by no means an eſſential ingredient of moral rectitude. If no natural good, if the happineſs of no being whatever could poſſibly be promoted by it, it would ſtill be the duty of every intelligent creature to reverence and worſhip the Deity: for the ſupremacy and infinite perfection of ſuch an object, makes it, in the higheſt degree, reaſonable, even ſuppoſing no advantage did or could redound from it to any agent whatever.

Is it to be imagined, that Mr Campbell would take it as an obliging compliment from his ingenious friend, if he told him that he eſteemed and regarded him, and teſtified his reſpect to him on all occaſions, for no better reaſon, than a ſuſpicion or fear, that, if he carried it otherwiſe towards him, it might, ſome time or other, turn about to his own diſadvantage. For my part, I think his friend, by ſuch an addreſs, would tell him, that he neither eſteemed nor regarded him at all. And let him therefore ſeriouſly conſider of it, if he has behaved himſelf ſuitably to the Author of his being; when he has publiſhed it to the world, That the main and chief motive of his worſhipping, eſteeming, and obeying his Creator, is merely his own profit, pleaſure, and advantage; and that the reaſon why he abſtains from blaſpheming and reproaching, and from all the fouleſt of vices, is, leſt his doing ſo might prove naturally hurtful unto him.

Upon the whole, I think it is very manifeſt, from what has been advanced, that our actions are called virtuous and good, on the account of their correſpondency to the law and will of God, and to the relation creatures ſtand in to the Author of their being;

and from their fitneſs to publiſh his ſupereminent excellencies, and to acknowledge their ſubjection to him in all things: and that the law, and will of God therein declared, is the great ſtandard and rule of all our actions, and not our own ſelf-love, intereſt, and pleaſure.

SECTION III.

That ſelf-love, as it exerts itſelf in the deſire of univerſal unlimited eſteem, ought not to be made the great commanding motive to virtuous actions; nor is the obtaining the good-liking and eſteem of thoſe beings, among whom we are mixed, to be our main end in purſuing them.

HAving made ſome reflections upon Mr Campbell's ſentiments, concerning the ſpring or principle, and the rule or ſtandard of virtuous actions; I ſhall now conſider his opinion, as to our great motive and main end, in purſuing a courſe of virtue. As to which, he expreſſeth himſelf as follows: "I like wiſe "hold, that ſelf-love, as it exerts itſelf in the deſire "of univerſal unlimited eſteem, is the great com-"manding motive that determines us to the purſuit "of ſuch virtuous actions †. Every man being thus "naturally joined in ſociety to all his own ſpecies, "and to God himſelf, as the great Author of his be-"ing, our ſupreme Head and kind Benefactor; if his "ſocial appetite be not miſerably perverted, he can-"not but neceſſarily ſeek for, and deſire the eſteem "and good-liking of all mankind; and particularly "of God, under whoſe government we all live ‡. If "we ſettle it, as our main purpoſe, to recommend "ourſelves to the love, eſteem, and commendation

† Enquiry, &c. p. 257. 258. ‡ Ibid. p. 72.

" of God, and of all mankind, through every ſtage " of our eternal exiſtence, (which, if we follow na- " ture, we cannot but do, as I have already explain- " ed in my enquiry), every degree of eſteem we ac- " quire here cannot but be exceeding grateful; and " the means that lift us up to this commendation " (which I have likewiſe ſhown, in the foregoing en- " quiry, to be the moral virtues) cannot but prove " extremely agreeable †. Upon the whole, I will " conclude, that the ſole and univerſal motive to vir- " tuous actions is ſelf-love, intereſt, or pleaſure ‡." Thus far our Author.

In order to fix the true ſtate of the queſtion, it is by no means denied that we may have a reſpect to our own happineſs: for God having made man capable of enjoying himſelf, and having condeſcended, at his creation, to encourage his obedience, by a promiſe of future and laſting felicity, which is renewed, through Chriſt, in the goſpel; it can be no part of the Chriſtian ſcheme, that men are to be denied to their own happineſs, and willing to forego it. But the queſtion is, Whether, in obeying the law of God, we ſhould chiefly act, from a ſenſe of the infinite perfection and authority of the Law-giver, and of our ſubjection to him; and from ſupreme love to infinite goodneſs itſelf, and a reſpect to the glory of God; to be manifeſted in our homage to him, as the chief motive, and laſt end, of all our actions? Or if we ought rather, though poor dependent creatures, principally to act from love to ourſelves, and an aim at our own advantage, pleaſure, and honour, as the commanding motive to virtuous actions, and our main end in purſuing them? The firſt ſeems to me to be founded in the na-

† Enquiry, &c. p. 273. ‡ Ibid. p. 463.

ture and relation of things; and the latter to be subverſive of both.

And I have the pleaſure to obſerve, that I don't differ in this my opinion, from a reverend and learned body of men, who, upon a certain occaſion, delivered their ſentiments on this head, in the following terms †: That "men are bound to make the glory "of God their chief end, though yet they are called "herewith to purſue happineſs." And "that by the "inſtinct of that new nature, the Lord endoweth all "his people with in regeneration, they are enabled, "by the influence of grace, in ſome meaſure, and daily "deſire, more and more, to ſerve God for himſelf, and "his ſupereminent excellencies, and not merely or "chiefly for the proſpect of their own happineſs." And "that it is agreeable, both to their character and "duty, to have a prevailing reſpect to God's glory, "as their ultimate end, and the chief motive of their "obedience." Thus far the reverend committee of the aſſembly of the church of Scotland.

In treating this ſubject very briefly, I ſhall firſt make it appear, from the ſcriptures of truth, that the glory of God, and not our own fame and eſteem, ought to be our main end in purſuing virtuous actions. Secondly, I ſhall enquire, if it be agreeable to the principles of reaſon, to make the deſire of univerſal unlimited eſteem the great commanding motive unto them?

I. As to the firſt, that the glory of God, and not our own fame and eſteem, ought to be our main end, in purſuing a courſe of virtue and obedience to God,

† See State of the Proceſs againſt Mr Simpſon, p. 277.

appears, if we consider, that our duty of worship and obedience is primarily founded upon the infinite excellencies of God, and what he is in himself. Thus, when God is about to deliver a law to Israel, at Horeb, he introduceth the whole with this solemn preface, I am the Lord JEHOVAH, *i. e.* the only true God, the self-existent, eternal, infinitely perfect, and necessary Being. It is true, it is added, Thy God, that is, by creation, and a special covenant-relation. And this is acknowledged to be a secondary and powerful motive to duty and obedience. But he fitly placeth himself, in his nature, and infinite perfections, in the front, as the primary foundation of all his commands, and of their duty in obeying them: because we must first, in order, conceive him, as infinitely perfect in himself, and an all-sufficient Being, else he had never given creatures a being, or well-being; and because their duty of obedience is founded in their relation to God, and dependence upon him: whereas their happiness, in a state of future and lasting felicity, proceeds, as I have shown above, from his free-will and bounty.

To this purpose, the prophet Jeremiah assigns it, as the great reason why we are to fear and worship God; because "there is none like unto him, and be-"cause he is great, and his name great in might." And we are elsewhere taught to glorify his name, because he only is holy, Jer. x. 6. 7. Rev. xv. 4.

AND the apostle Paul condemns these who did service to them, which, by nature, were no gods, Gal. iv. 8.; intimating, that God's dominion, and title to our worship and service, is primarily founded in the infinite and supereminent excellency of his nature. In a suitableness to this, when the Lycaonians took

Paul and Barnabas for gods, they answered them, by telling them, not that they "could not do much "good unto them," which, in a ministerial way, they were abundantly qualified for, but that they were weak, imperfect, dependent creatures, and had not a divine nature, and so were not a fit object of worship and adoration. From which it is very manifest, that God's title to our worship and service, is primarily founded upon what he is in himself, and not upon his bounty to his creatures. And his legislative authority over all dependent, intelligent beings, stands upon the same basis and foundation. For though he has a right to prescribe laws to those, to whom he gave a being; yet it was, in the first place, owing to his being infinitely perfect, and infinitely good in himself, that he gave a being to those who had no being or existence.

And therefore, not only in respect of what he hath done in a way of bounty, but primarily, because he is in himself infinitely perfect, he must be worthy of the highest esteem and adoration, and of the most absolute subjection and resignation, that finite creatures are capable of rendering to the Author of their being. From all which, it is very manifest, that we are obliged, principally, to love, fear, worship, and obey God, for "what he is in himself," and not chiefly from a prospect of our own happiness, pleasure, and interest.

The apostle Paul confirms this doctrine, from that plain topic, that God is the first Cause, and therefore he is the unlimited End of all things. "For of "him, and through him, and to him are all things," Rom. xi. 36. "The nature of God consists in this," says a learned author *, "That he is the prime and

* Pearson on the Creed, p. 23.

" original Cauſe of all things, as an independent Be-
" ing, upon which all things alſo depend; and
" likewiſe he is the ultimate End or final Cauſe
" of all." And Solomon tells us, " That God made
" all things for himſelf;" and it is plain he could have no other end than himſelf, and his own glory, in ſo doing; for there was nothing good or great, and truly lovely, but himſelf. And all rational creatures, acting as ſuch, cannot but make him, and his glory, their laſt and ultimate end. For, ſeeing it is the brighteſt ray of the divine image, that a created underſtanding ſhould ſee and judge of things in God's light, and entertain the ſame ſentiments of them with him, whoſe infinite knowledge makes it impoſſible he can fall into any miſtake; it muſt therefore be the moſt embelliſhing excellency of the ſoul of man, to move to the ſame end with the Author of his being.

It is very manifeſt, that ſelf-love, in a ſupreme ſenſe, can only be the diſtinguiſhing character and peculiar glory of the ever-bleſſed God. He can love nothing above himſelf, and his own glory, becauſe there is nothing good or great, and truly lovely, beſides himſelf. It therefore flows from his own infinite perfection, that he loves himſelf in a ſupreme manner; and it is his peculiar glory to do ſo. Upon the other hand, for a finite creature to be acted ſolely from a principle of ſelf-love, argues the greateſt imperfection and depravity of nature. For, it is either to ſay, that there is nothing greater or better than itſelf, and what relates to itſelf, than which nothing can be more blaſphemous; or, that a rational creature, acting as ſuch, may prefer a leſſer good to a greater; than which nothing can be more abſurd.

If it is pretended, that the creatures's happineſs is the greateſt good to itſelf, and that no rational creature can love any thing but as good to itſelf: It is replied, That when man's happineſs is placed where it ought to be, in the enjoyment of God, an infinite good, yet it may be conſidered, either as a finite creature is thereby made happy, which is a finite, relative, precarious good, becauſe mutable in its nature, and finite in its ſubject; as is plain in the caſe of the fallen angels: or, it may be conſidered, as an infinite God is thereby glorified, which is an abſolute infinite good. Now, if a man's happineſs, though in the enjoyment of God, be chiefly ſought, that the man himſelf may be happy therein, then it is himſelf that he ultimately and chiefly ſeeks in the enjoyment of God: and if he ultimately ſeek himſelf, though the nobleſt means, ſuch as the enjoyment of God, be made uſe of; yet they are only means to the end, and loved chiefly for the ſake of the end; and thus man is made his own ultimate end: and if his own ultimate end, then he is his own god: for a man cannot eſteem, love, or deſire any thing beyond his ultimate end: and what a man eſteems, loves, and deſires moſt, is his god. But if a man chiefly deſire his own happineſs in the enjoyment of God, that God may be glorified in him, and by him, he thereby acknowledges God and his glory to be his ultimate end; which is the very thing we contend for.

Whatever excels is worthy of eſteem, ſuited to the degree of its excellency. Now, God's excellency being every way infinitely ſuperior to all creatures, they muſt ſink infinitely below him; and if they act according to reaſon, they muſt acknowledge his infinite perfection, and their dependence upon him, and

absolute subjection unto him. And it cannot be refused to be essential to the moral perfection of a reasonable creature, to esteem and love that Being above all things, who infinitely transcends every thing else, in glory, excellency, and perfection. And therefore every man, acting according to the original frame of human nature, must have the highest respect to the honour and glory of God, as his chief and ultimate end. It is by no means asserted, that we are obliged to a willingness to forego our own happiness; which is no constitutive part of a subordinate end: seeing all that is required, is to love the ultimate end most, and the subordinate less. I hope these who make God's glory subordinate to man's happiness, do not therefore say, that they are obliged, in some cases, willingly to give up with the glory of God, for their own private interest. But to proceed,

Let us further consider, that man stands in a subordination to God in his being; and therefore in a subordination to him, as his last end. Hence the apostle directs us, that "whether we eat or drink, or "whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of "God," 1 Cor. x. 31. The rule is general, not to be restrained to the eating of meat offered to idols, of which the former discourse had been; but extends itself to whatever we do, that is, to all human actions whatsoever. And elsewhere he tells us, "That we "are not our own, but are bought with a price, and "therefore are obliged to glorify God in our souls "and bodies, which are his," 1 Cor. vi. 20. And it is highly agreeable to reason, that we, deriving our being from another by creation, and passing into the right of another by redemption, should employ, our derived and borrowed all, for his honour and glory.

It was the end of our election and effectual callings that we should shew forth the praises of him, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, 1 Pet. ii. 9. And it was one great design of the death of Christ, to restore man to his primitive and ultimate end; for he died for us, that we should not live to ourselves, but to him who died for us, and rose again, 2 Cor. v. 15. And this is plainly the work and business of the spirits of just men made perfect, in these regions of light and bless above; who are represented, in scripture, as employing all their active faculties in worshipping, adoring, and praising him that sits upon the throne, and the Lamb for ever and ever. God here is ALL IN ALL, the Centre and End of all; and is infinitely lifted up above all: and his servants do serve him, and behold his face, and eternally lose themselves in love, wonder, and praise!

It may be further observed, that if our own happiness and self-interest be allowed to be the chief motive of our glorifying God upon earth, then the chief motive of our hatred against sin, and of our returning to God with a penitential sorrow for it, cannot be the offence and dishonour done thereby to God, but our own ruin and misery; and the chief motive to the love of God, by which we must eminently glorify him, must be our own happiness, and love to ourselves. But to assert these things, is, at once, to contradict the whole scripture, and to overthrow the plainest principles of natural religion.

And if self-love is acknowledged to be the leading principle among dependent beings, then it will follow, that there is such an unintelligible thing, as a creature made by God, and yet not for God and his

glory, but for itself, and for its own private interest, as its highest end: and that the creature is its own ultimate happiness, as well as its own ultimate end; seeing no created being, in a course of action, can arrive at a greater happiness, than to attain the ultimate end of all its actions.

I HAVE elsewhere † observed, that a respect to the glory of God, was the highest and noble principle that moved our Lord Jesus Christ to undertake and undergo his sufferings; and that a chief and primary regard to the honour of God, as the ultimate end of his whole mediation, did most conspicuously appear in the whole course of his obedience, wherein he has left us a pattern, to be followed by us, with veneration, in the whole of our Christian course: and therefore I shall not at present enlarge further upon this branch of the argument; but proceed

To observe, that as the apostle has given it as the black character of the worst of men, that should be a plague to human society, and the reproach of human nature, in the latter days, that they are "lovers of "their ownselves," and "lovers of pleasures more "than lovers of God," 2 Tim. iii. 1. 2. 4. So our Lord and Saviour has made self-denial the distinguishing and necessary character of all his disciples and followers: for, saith he, "If any man will come "after me, let him deny himself, and take up his "cross, and follow me." Christ's disciples must come after him; that is, they must walk in the same way that he walked in, and propose that same high and ultimate end Christ aimed at, the glory of God. And they must "deny themselves," and herein "come

† Sermon on Jude, vers. 3.

"after Christ;" whose birth, life, and death, were all a continued act of self-denial, Phil. ii. 7. 8. They must deny themselves absolutely: they must not admire their own excellencies, nor gratify their own humours, nor seek their own things; and they must not lean to their own understanding, nor be their own end.

It is an excellent saying that Bernard hath upon the nativity of Christ †, "What more detestable, "what more unworthy, or what deserves severer punishment, saith he, than for a poor man to magnify himself; after he hath seen the great and High "God so humble as to become a little Child?" "And," adds he, "It is intolerable impudence for a "worm to swell with pride, after it hath seen Majesty emptying itself."

And let us but consider how opposite stoutness and pride is to the spirit of a Christian. Nothing certainly can be more so to the Spirit of Christ. Our Saviour was lowly, meek, and self-denying. He has assured us, "That he did not seek his own will, "but the will of him that sent him," Rom. xv. 3. And the apostle tells us, "That he pleased not himself," John iv. 34. and v. 30. And seeing he was of a most humble and condescending spirit, and sought not his own things, but ours, Phil. ii. 4. 5. doth it become us to be proud, vain, and selfish.

It likewise deserves our consideration, upon this argument, that our Lord and Saviour tells us, that the love of God is the first and great commandment of all, and the summary of all the commands of the

† Bernard Serm. 1st de Nativit.

firſt table, Mark xii. 29. 30. And that he teaches us that we muſt love him with all our hearts, ſtrength, ſoul, and mind; importing, that our love to him muſt be ſupreme and ſingular, as well as ſincere; and that we muſt love him more than any thing elſe. And his ſaying that this is the firſt and greateſt commandment, can bear no other meaning, but that obedience to this command is the ſpring of obedience to all the reſt; and that our obedience to him is only acceptable, when it flows from love to God himſelf. And though we are allowed to love ourſelves, and purſue happineſs, yet how can it be otherwiſe in the nature of things, but that we muſt love God better than ourſelves, and every thing elſe; becauſe he is JEHOVAH, a Being infinitely better than we are, and every thing beſide himſelf? We ought therefore to love God in a ſupreme manner; and to love him chiefly for himſelf, and not mainly for the proſpect of our own happineſs. For to love God chiefly as good to us, is to love him chiefly for ourſelves, and ſo to love ourſelves more than God; than which nothing can be more impious and contradictory to the principles of religion, whether natural or revealed.

A CELEBRATED Author † ſays, "That we muſt "firſt conceive the object lovely and excellent in it"ſelf, before we can wiſh it loving and kind to us. "And let us conſider," adds he, "how much thoſe "that are conſcious to their having virtue enough "in themſelves, to make them prize it in others, are "in love with Cato, Scipio, and thoſe other heroes, "upon the bare knowledge of their virtues, although "from them they derive no preſent advantange. "Since then," ſays our Author, "we pay ſuch diſin-

† Mr Boyle in his diſcourſe of Seraphic love.

"tereſted love to ſome few, faint, and ill-refined vir-
"tues, that never did profit us; how much, in ſuch a
"ſcore, and at that rate, ſhould we love him, who ſo
"poſſeſſes all perfection, that each of his perfections
"is infinite? Though his benefits to us did not en-
"title him to our love, his eſſence and perfections,
"the only ſource of thoſe benefits, would give a right
"to it; and though we owed him nothing for what
"we are, we yet ſhould owe him love for what he is."

It may be eaſily demonſtrated, that ſelf-love, as it is to be found among lapſed mankind, is moſt irregular and inordinate. And can it be thought, that that inordinate paſſion of felicity, which, at once, ſeduced both angels and men from their laſt end and true happineſs, by pride and folly, can juſtly be eſteemed the leading principle and chief motive of all moral actions? Was not Adam obliged to love and obey his Creator, and that although he had made no promiſe to him of future and eternal happineſs, upon his obedience? And, ſhall we imagine, that this is the genuine fruit of God's gracious condeſcenſion, in promiſing and conferring happineſs on the creature, to make his love and obedience become merely ſelfiſh and mercenary?

Love is the great thing that God demands of us; and therefore the firſt and great thing we ſhould devote to him. And ſeeing good is the proper object of love, God being good infinitely, originally, and eternally, muſt therefore be loved in the firſt place; and nothing loved beſide him, but what is loved for him: and therefore our obedience muſt be animated with a principle of ſupreme love to God, and a due reſpect to his honour and glory, as our laſt and ultimate end.

And it is certain, that if we love God above all things, as it has been shown we are obliged to do; we cannot possibly fail to celebrate his infinite excellencies, and to ascribe that glory which is due to his august and tremendous name: and nothing will be farther from our thoughts, than to make our own fame and renown to rival it with him.

Upon the whole, I think it is very manifest, from the holy scriptures, that the glory of God, and not our own fame and esteem, ought to be our main end in pursuing virtuous actions.

II. I Shall now proceed to enquire, If it be agreeable to the principles of reason, to make the desire of universal unlimited esteem the great commanding motive unto a course of virtue and laudable actions?

And, I think, an ingenious writer has set this matter in a true light, who expresseth himself in the following terms *: "It is usual for us, when we "would take off from the fame and reputation of an "action, to ascribe it to vain-glory, and a desire of "fame in the actor. Nor is this common judgment "and opinion of mankind ill founded: for certainly "it denotes no great bravery of mind, to be worked "up to any noble action by so selfish a motive, and "to do that out of a desire of fame, which we could "not be prompted to by a disinterested love to man-"kind, or by a generous passion, for the glory of "him that made us.

"Fame is a thing difficult to be obtained by all, "but particularly by those who thirst after it; since

* Spectator, Vol. 4. No. 255 256.

" moſt men have ſo much either of ill-nature or of " warineſs, as not to gratify and ſoothe the vanity of " the ambitious man: and ſince this very thirſt af- " ter fame, naturally betrays him into ſuch indecen- " cies as are a leſſening to his reputation, and is it- " ſelf looked upon as a weakneſs in the greateſt cha- " racters.

" In the next place, fame is eaſily loſt; and as dif- " ficult to be preſerved, as it was at firſt to be ac- " quired.——How difficult is it to preſerve a great " name; when he that has acquired it is obnoxious " to ſuch little weakneſſes and infirmities, as are no " ſmall diminution to it, when diſcovered!——— " Were no diſpoſitions in others to cenſure a famous " man, he would meet with no ſmall trouble in keep- " ing up his reputation in all its height and ſplen- " dor. There muſt be always a noble train of ac- " tions, to preſerve his fame in life and motion: for, " when it is once at a ſtand, it naturally flags and " languiſhes.

" Ambition raiſes a ſecret tumult in the ſoul; it " inflames the mind, and puts it into a violent hurry " of thought: it is ſtill reaching after an empty i- " maginary good, that has not in it the power to " abate or ſatisfy it.—It may, indeed, fill the mind " for a while with a giddy kind of pleaſure, but it is " ſuch a pleaſure, as makes a man reſtleſs and uneaſy " under it; and which does not ſo much ſatisfy the " preſent thirſt, as it excites freſh deſires, and ſets " the ſoul on new enterpriſes.

" Nor is fame only unſatisfying in itſelf, but the " deſire of it lays open to many accidental troubles, " which thoſe are free from who have no ſuch a

" tender regard to it. How often is the ambitious " man caſt down and diſappointed, if he receives no " praiſe where he expected it? Nay, how often is " he mortified with the praiſes he receives, if they " do not riſe ſo high as he thinks they ought: which " they ſeldom do, unleſs increaſed by flattery; ſince " few men have ſo good an opinion of us as we have " of ourſelves?"

I Hope the ingenious reaſoning of this polite writer, will have its own force to perſuade Mr Campbell, that the eſteem of his fellow-men, and of thoſe beings among whom he is mixed, is a thing by no means ſo valuable as he at firſt apprehended; and that he will think of following a courſe of virtue, for the future, from a view to an higher end, and from a more noble motive than ſelf-love, intereſt, and pleaſure.

Mr Campbell likewiſe tells us, That " we are " to ſettle it, as our main purpoſe, to recommend " ourſelves to the love, and eſteem, and commenda- " tion of God; and that the Moral Virtues are the " means that lift us up to this commendation." But it is very manifeſt, that mankind are in a depraved ſtate, and that they have offended God; which is proved, by the malignity of the wicked, by the ſacrifices which obtained in the Pagan world, and by the complaints which Heathen philoſophers have made of the depravation of mankind, and the wickedneſs of the age themſelves had fallen into. And, can it be pretended to be a principle of ſound reaſon, that the Moral Virtues, or the beſt actions of men in a ſinful ſtate, can gain them the eſteem and good-liking of God, here and hereafter? Nature's light

will teach us, and Plato, cited by the Author *, referred to in the margin, has owned it, That a holy and good God did not create mankind, depraved and disordered in their faculties, as they now are. Their depravation and corruption is owing to themselves, and not to the Author of their being: and hence they must, in the nature of the thing, be justly obnoxious to punishment, and the divine displeasure, upon this account, and for all the consequences of this depravation of their nature; and particularly for this, among others, that they can perform no duty in such a manner as to please God.

And it is very certain, that no man, in a state of depravation, can do any thing, with that love to God, and respect to his authority, which the law doth require; and therefore his best actions cannot recommend him to the esteem of the Author of his being. For, if he is supposed to do any thing, every way as the law requires, he is not a depraved, but a perfect creature; and if he can do any thing perfectly well, he may, by the same abilities, do every thing to perfection.

But, seeing the best thing he can do, falls short of the law and rule of action, it is therefore sinful: and the best actions of men being thus imperfect and sinful; as it is a vain imagination to pretend, that they can render men acceptable to God, and gain his esteem and good-liking; so we cannot enough adore God, for the revelation of Christ, and the hopes of being justified by his merit, and sanctified by his Spirit.

* Gale's Court of the Gentiles, part. 4, lib. 1. cap. 4.

Can it be thought that there is any excellency in the moſt holy creatures, but what God himſelf has given, and preſerves in them? It muſt therefore be eſteemed more his own than theirs; and all the praiſe of it is due to him alone. And, as to us, who are lapſed creatures, what can he ſee in us but ſin and moral uncleanneſs, the very object of his holy averſion? It were therefore the moſt abſurd thing in the world, for any created being whatſoever, to make its own fame and eſteem the higheſt end of its actions; ſeeing the purſuing ſuch an ultimate end muſt, in the nature of things, be equally an argument of a lapſe among ſuch creatures as keep it mainly in their view; as it is abſolutely inconſiſtent, with the perfect ſtate of innocent and upright creatures, to be chiefly influenced by it.

And as to what our Author ſays, That every man muſt neceſſarily deſire the eſteem of all mankind, and paſſionately deſire the eſteem and good opinion of thoſe among whom he is mixed; I muſt beg him to tell me, if he, or any other man, can reaſonably deſire any greater eſteem, than his merit entitles him unto? And let him tell me, at the ſame time, what name that paſſion deſerves, that can inſpire a man with the remoteſt thought, that his own good qualities are ſo great and numerous, that they will juſtly challenge ſuch a profound reſpect and regard from his fellow-men, that, when duly conſidered, may be reaſonably reckoned by him to be an higher motive to determine him to virtue, than a reſpect to the authority and glory of the great God, from whom he has received life, and breath, and all things.

I Conclude this argument with obſerving, That

for a man to make himself his own ultimate end, is to make himself the object of his own supreme love, desire, and esteem; because nothing can be loved, desired, or esteemed, above the ultimate end of a rational agent: and every thing else, being only means to that end, must, in the nature of the thing, have only a secondary regard, and be loved for its sake.

But for a creature to love and esteem itself in a supreme manner, is at once to throw away all regard to the Deity, and to renounce its dependence upon him. For, it being certain, that religious worship essentially includes in it, that the object be loved and esteemed above all things; it must follow, that vainglorious self is the idol to be worshipped, according to this scheme of principles; and that God is to be dethroned, and neither worshipped nor acknowledged: and if any worship at all is to be paid him, it is only so far as self can serve a turn by it; which, I think, cannot well be allowed to be any kind of worship at all, unless Mr Campbell be delighted with the distinction of supreme and inferior worship, and have the confidence to ascribe the latter to his Maker.

Thus, I think, it has been made very evident, from the sacred oracles, and from the principles of reason, that the glory of God, and not our own self-love, interest, and pleasure, ought to be our main and ultimate end; and that our own fame and esteem ought not to be the great commanding motive to virtuous actions.

CONCLUSION.

I might conclude this essay, by making some general reflections upon Mr Campbell's treatise, and his preface thereto prefixed. But, seeing it would

draw out this paper to a much greater length than I intend, I shall not enter upon them at present.

Only, I think, it might have been reasonably expected, that our Author would have advanced solid arguments, to support such a scheme of principles, as he has thought fit to send abroad into the world; but if we search his whole book, we can find no other but the following, or others of the like nature; namely, That he cannot but be governed by self-love, because he sees all the world beside only animated from this principle.

But what although Mr Campbell should find it in himself, and can appeal to the breasts of others, that a silly vanity has too much the ascendent; and that a regard to the authority of the great God, and a respect to his glory, has not that prevailing influence it ought to have upon the actions of men? will this say, that this disorder and confusion in mens breasts, belongs to the original frame of human nature? No more, I am sure, than Mr Campbell can prove, from an highway-man's being induced, from his self-interest, to plunder the innocent traveller, and afterwards cut his throat, that robbery and murder belong to the original frame of human nature.

Of all things in the world vice is the most universal. Every thinking man must feel this corruption in himself, and observe it in others. But it were a weak way of reasoning to argue thus: Vice is universal; and all the world are, less or more, under its influence: *Ergo*, vice belongs to the original frame of human nature. I say, It were exceeding blunt to run away with the consequence, as sufficiently proved, by a bare proposal of the argument; and

found an imaginary triumph, by an harangue of three or four hundred pages. And however beautiful expreſſions, and laboured periods, may be entertaining to ſome of a polite taſte; yet I cannot, for my part, have any great value for a book, however prolix and verboſe, when its reaſoning proceeds upon no better a foundation than *petitio principii, et ignorantia elenchi.*

NEITHER can I think that mankind are exceedingly obliged to Mr Campbell's compliment, in repreſenting them as ſo many vain glorious creatures; ſeeking fame, and thirſting for eſteem and renown, as the main end of all their actions. For all that creatures have is derived, and is the fruit of God's exuberant goodneſs; and therefore all the praiſe of it muſt be due to him, and not to themſelves. And nothing that is good and truly valuable can be found among lapſed creatures, but what is owing to grace in its riſe, progreſs, and conſummation; which muſt for ever exclude all boaſting in the creature, and induce him that glorieth, to glory in the Lord.

AND I may appeal it to the breaſt of every thinking man, if it is not reaſonable that rational creatures, deriving their being from God, as the firſt Cauſe, ſhould employ all their faculties and powers to promote his glory and honour? And, if it is not manifeſt, that their agreeing in one laſt end neceſſarily unites them, as lines meeting in the centre; whereas making as many laſt ends as there are rational creatures, leads to an univerſal diſorder and confuſion? And if their purſuing the ſame high and ultimate end with the Author of their being muſt not be worthy of their nature, a branch of their conformity and likeneſs to God, and the way to main-

tain union and intercourse with him? Whereas, to set up our own self-interest, pleasure, and esteem, as our highest end, is either to say, that a man may attempt to pass into an higher rank than that of created beings; or that he may act otherwise, than a creature is, in reason, obliged to do, from a consideration of its dependence upon God, and of its own weak and limited perfections.

No doubt, we are to desire, and endeavour to maintain our character and good name; that we may be useful in the world, and that God may be honoured by us: but to make it our main end, and the highest and sole motive to action, and thus to set it above the due respect that dependent beings ought to have to the authority and glory of the great God; is to throw up all regard to religion, whether natural or revealed. Such a vitious self-love ought by all means to be mortified. To this purpose, our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ has taught us to deny ourselves. And the apostle has given a check to this unreasonable passion, in these remarkable words: "Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou boast, "as if thou hadst not received it?"

And ambition and vain-glory is most certainly a natural corruption; disposing us to boast and commend ourselves, and to seek applause and esteem. The apostles of Christ did vindicate their ministry, from this as well as other vices, 1 Thess. ii. 6. and made ostentation the characteristic of false teachers, 2 Cor. x. 12. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ reproved it in the scribes and Pharisees; that in their prayers, alms, fasting, affected habits, and titles, they sought the praise of men. And as the apostle Paul did not seek glory of men, so he did

forbid it to others. "Let us not be desirous of "vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one "another." It is a vice directly opposite to humility, unbecoming a man, and highly dishonourable to God, and contrary to the gospel. And though some among the Heathen took it for a virtue, as they did likewise others of the foulest of vices, yet we have not so learned Christ.

MAY therefore "that mind be in us, which also "was in Christ Jesus;" who being one God with the Father, and the Son of the Father, by an eternal, necessary, and ineffable generation; yet having, by his own voluntary condescension, assumed our nature, "sought not his own glory, but the glory of him "that sent him," John viii. 50. and vii. 18. Phil. ii. 5. 6. 7. And may the love of Christ constrain us to a course of holy walking with God, because "we "thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all "dead: and that he died for all, that they which "live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, "but unto him which died for them, and rose a-"gain," 2 Cor. v. 14. 15.

FINIS.

A BANNER displayed becauſe of the TRUTH:

ALSO,

MERCY and JUDGMENT in the Effects of a Goſpel-miniſtry.

TWO DISCOURSES:

BY

MR WILLIAM MONCRIEFF,
Miniſter of the Goſpel at Alloa.

A BANNER displayed because of the Truth, matter of praise to all the well-wishers thereof.

A

SERMON preached at the opening of the Associate Synod, at Edinburgh, August 19. 1755.

PSAL. lx. 4.

Thou hast given a Banner to them that fear thee; that it may be displayed, because of the Truth. Selah.

THE title of this psalm points out to us the penman and occasion thereof. It was penned by David king of Israel, after he was settled upon the throne; upon occasion of an illustrious victory obtained over the Syrians and Edomites, by his forces, under the command of Joab, eighteen thousand being left dead upon the field of battle.

FROM the beginning of the psalm, he calls to remembrance the low case they had been in for a long time before this. What was the cause of all, we have in the first verse: they had provoked the Lord so by their sins, that he, "being justly displeased, had cast them off;" which he had manifested, in his "scattering them abroad." The dishonours done the Lord, and his righteous displeasure upon account thereof, cannot but go very near the heart of one that desires to fear his name. In the close of the verse, we have a prayer for his gracious return, "O "turn thyself to us again;" as that which he, in the name of the church, earnestly desires; being indeed persuaded that it is this would mend matters with

them. As it is his being provoked to depart, that is at the bottom of all the scatterings that take place; so it is his return that would put another face upon affairs, and bring them into order again, uniting us to him, and to one another in him.

He proceeds, in a back-look to their former sad and low case, verse. 2. 3. "The Lord had made the "earth to tremble; had broken it; had shewed his "people hard things; and made them to drink the "wine of astonishment." This may perhaps have a reference to the confusions during the reign of Saul, and the struggle between David and him; not excluding the many onsets they met with from the Philistines, and others, their evil neighbours: which were too often attended with renting divisions among themselves, "which caused sad thoughts of heart," Judg. v. 15. In the close of verse. 2. we have a prayer, in a suitableness to this lamentation, for the "healing of their breaches;" pointing out, that there were still melancholy things among them, and that any begun deliverance needed to be further carried on. Under all our scattered and broken cases, we had need to have our eyes only to the Lord, as the great Healer. And when he is pleased to answer his people's prayers, and grant any deliverance; it is very proper exercise then, to call to remembrance the former sad situation we were in before he interposed: for hereby we may see more clearly the Lord's goodness, in seasonably relieving us; and it is a mean, by the Lord's blessing, to prevent our turning secure, lest we should be again put into the furnace.

In this verse, after the mournful lamentation, a thankful acknowledgment is made of the Lord's good-

nefs unto them, in what he had wrought: "Thou "hast given a banner to them that fear thee; that "it may be displayed, because of the truth." In which words we have several things observable.

1. A CERTAIN class of people are characterised in these words, "them that fear thee." This is the character of the church and people of God, who are the only fearers of his name: they are the people "that are of a contrite and humble spirit, who trem- "ble at his word." They are so denominated, not from an unbelieving slavish fear of God; but from that filial reverential fear of him, that is "put in "their hearts, that they may not depart from him." This character, in a strict sense, is only applicable to the true invisible church, that have had the experience of the day of Christ's power. But, in a more large sense, it may point out the visible church, as contradistinguished from the world; who, adhering to the doctrines contained in the Lord's word, and as to their outward conversation walking according to the rule therein laid down, do profess to fear his name. But we intend not to insist upon this at present.

2. WE have a certain privilege conferred upon the people thus characterised; a banner is given them: "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee." Some, by the *banner*, understand David's government, according to God's promise of giving him the throne; which was indeed a strong encouragement to them that feared the Lord, and a token for good of his doing great things. And if we should consider the words, as having literally a respect to this; we must yet view David, in his government, as only a type of Christ, the Son of David, "upon whose shoulders "the government is laid;" of whom, it is said, "he

" ſhall ſtand for an enſign of the people," Iſ. xi. 10. In the doctrine of the goſpel does Chriſt ſtand as an enſign to the people; in him, as the centre of their unity, are all believers, the army of the Lamb, gathered together into one; to him they do ſeek, and in him they glory. But as, at this time, the Lord had ſpirited a number in Iſrael to appear againſt the Syrians and Edomites, theſe enemies of his work and people, and had bleſſed them with ſucceſs, and thus given a breathing to his people, enabling them to improve the opportunity, by appearing for him and his cauſe; we know not but this may be underſtood by the banner given. The Lord, notwithſtanding of awful things threatened, and in righteous judgment inflicted upon a people; ſometimes puts a *banner* of a teſtimony for his cauſe into the hands of a remnant, as his witneſſes that he is God: and not only, in his providence, gives them an opportunity, but, by his grace, enables them to improve the ſame, in a way of diſplaying it, becauſe of the truth.

3. We may notice by whom this privilege is beſtowed: " Thou haſt given a banner; thou that caſt " us off, and ſcattered us; thou that madeſt the earth " to tremble, that haſt broken it; thou that haſt " ſhewed thy people hard things, and cauſed them to " drink wine of aſtoniſhment, thou haſt given a ban- " ner." When " the enemy comes in like a flood," it is " the Spirit of the Lord that lifts up a ſtandard " againſt him," Iſ. lix. 19. The Lord had, in ſome meaſure, maintained his cauſe all along among Iſrael: and now, when the enemy comes in like an inundation, he ſpirited them to appear for him, to fight his battles, wherein his truth was ſo much concerned, and made their attempts ſucceſsful, giving them occaſion of triumph; and thus he gave them " a banner to

"be displayed, because of the truth." So are his little army still enabled, under the influence of his Spirit, to oppose their enemies; and, by his blessing, made successful, in a way of "displaying their ban-"ners."

4. The end of the banner's being given is declared: It is, "that it may be displayed." It is put into their hands, and opportunity is given them, and they are not to sit still, indifferent and inactive, neutral and secure; but to bestir themselves, like men valiant for the truth upon the earth.

5. The reason of the banner's being given and displayed is adduced: "because of the truth." Which may either have a respect to the giving of the banner, and then it is because of the truth of God's promise; or to the displaying of it, and then it points out, that we are to display the banner in behalf of the truth, *viz.* the whole of the Lord's cause, which his witnesses and soldiers are to bear testimony unto, and fight for, all those truths revealed in his word; "for "we can do nothing against the truth, but for the "truth," 2 Cor. xiii. 8.

6. This is here brought in as matter of praise, after the mournful commemoration of their former low case; when the Lord seemed to have "cast them "off, and had shewed them hard things," that yet he "had given them a banner, to be displayed because "of the truth." The verse is concluded with *Selah*: which, according to many, points out a pause in singing: but as it is generally placed at some remarkable passage, it may denote, that what is recorded, is worthy of our special attention and remembrance.

THE doctrinal proposition we lay down from the words, to be considered a little, is this following, *viz.*

"THAT a BANNER given to be displayed, because of the truth, is matter of praise to all the well-wishers of truth."—"Thou hast given a banner to them that "fear thee; that it may be displayed because of the "truth." On this account the church of Christ does join in a song.

IN discourfing this proposition a little, we would essay the prosecution of the following method, *viz.*

I. To consider the *banner* given.

II. THE *displaying* of this banner.

III. THE *reason* of its being given and displayed, "because of the truth."

IV. To confirm the doctrine; or shew, that a banner given, to be displayed because of the truth, is ground and matter of praise.

V. To deduce some inferences for application. All as the Lord shall be pleased to direct and assist.

WE return then, through divine assistance, to the first thing proposed.

HEAD I.

I. "To consider the banner given, to be displayed because of the truth."

A BANNER is a warlike ensign; and the giving it to the church, speaks forth her being here in a militant condition. She has many enemies to oppose; sin, Satan, and the world. And how do the church's enemies oppose her? It is in a way of setting themselves against the truths, the cause of Christ, against

" the word of their teſtimony." But whatever oppoſition be thus made, it is not without contradiction from them, in a way of making a ſtand for truth; for there is a banner of a teſtimony given them, put into their hands, that it may be diſplayed becauſe of the truth. Concerning which, it may be obſerved, that,

1. A BANNER is of uſe for unity among the ſoldiers; it is to this they gather, and are as one body, under one ſtandard or banner. So we read of a gathering to the enſign, Iſ. xi. 12. " He ſhall ſet up " an enſign for the nations, and ſhall aſſemble the " outcaſts of Iſrael, and gather together the diſper- " ſed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth." The Lamb's army are gathered together about Chriſt, the great Standard-bearer, and inliſted under his one banner; and thus are united among themſelves. Some indeed talk, as if the lifting up of the ſtandard, and diſplaying the banner, were the way to mar unity in the church: but ſuch miſtake the nature of that unity that is required in the church, among the army of the Captain of ſalvation. The unity that is to take place in the church, is the unity of the ſpirit: Eph. iv. 3. " Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spi- " rit." But this cannot be, but in a way of endeavouring to diſplay the banner, becauſe of the truth; for the Spirit is the Spirit of truth. It is an unity that bears ſome reſemblance to that eſſential union between the Father and the Son, John xvii. 21. 22. " That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in " me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be one in " us;——that they may be one, even as we are one:" which therefore muſt be a holy union, an unity in the truth; as God is the God of truth, and his eternal Son is not only the way, but alſo the truth. The unity the apoſtle exhorts the Philippians to, Phil. i.

27. is "to ſtand faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind, "ſtriving together for the faith of the goſpel:" not of one mind at any rate, though it ſhould be at the expence of truth; but of one mind in ſtriving, that is, "in contending earneſtly for the faith of the go-"ſpel." All which ſhew, that true unity in the church is founded upon the truth. God, in revealing an abundance of truth to his church, reveals alſo an abundance of peace: and the way to maintain this unity, is to be faithful in diſplaying the banner becauſe of the truth. It was a ſaying of Luther,—"Ra-"ther than any thing ſhould fall of the kingdom of "Chriſt and his glory, let not only peace go, but let "heaven and earth go too."

2. A BANNER is of uſe for animating the ſoldiers: it is heartleſs in the battle, when the ſtandard falls. Iſ. x. 18. The Lord repreſents the diſpiritedneſs of the Aſſyrians, when he would riſe to plead with them, by this, "It ſhall be as when a ſtandard-bear-"er fainteth." This diſpirits the whole army, and puts all into confuſion. But it is encouraging, while they ſee the banner ſtanding, to fight; leſt it ſhould fall into the enemies hands, and give them occaſion of triumph. So "a banner given to be diſplayed, "becauſe of the truth," tends to animate and encourage the ſoldiers of the Lamb: "They ſhall fear "the name of the Lord from the weſt, and his glory "from the riſing of the ſun: when the enemy ſhall "come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord ſhall "lift up a ſtandard againſt him," Iſ. lix. 19. When they ſee the ſtandard lifted up, they will be encouraged to join under it, and to appear boldly in defence of it. How heartleſs are Chriſt's ſoldiers, when his ſtandard, in their apprehenſion, is like to fall; when "his ſtrength is delivered into captivity, and his glo-

"ry left in the hand of the proud enemy?" But when the Lord appears, giving them a banner to be displayed, because of the truth, how does this encourage them? and then, in a dependence upon his grace, they are bold, saying, "In the name of our God "will we set up our banners, Psal. xx. 5.

3. A BANNER is of use for striking the adversaries with terror. It is a fearful sight to the enemy, to see their opponents regularly displaying their banners, Is. xxxi. 9. It is said of the Assyrian,—"And "he shall pass over to his strong-hold, for fear; and his "princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the Lord, "whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem." When the church "looks forth, fair as the moon, and "clear as the sun, she is terrible as an army with "banners," Cant. vi. 10. When the Lord makes any appearance for his people's deliverance, as was the case at this time in Israel, and enables them to improve it, by appearing for his cause, this is indeed a fearful sight to their opponents; so that it may be said of them, "They saw it, and so they marvelled; "they were troubled, and hasted away; fear took "hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in "travail," Psal. xlviii. 5. 6. When the church overcomes, it is "by the word of their testimony," Rev. xii. 11. And if they would appear formidable to their enemies, and expect to gain ground against them, they must hold it fast; in a dependence upon the grace that is in Christ Jesus, the Captain of our salvation. In a word,

4. A BANNER is of use for letting the soldiers know their side. It readily has the king's arms upon it, and some motto or inscription declarative of that cause for which it is displayed. So is this ban-

ner given to them that fear him: it is the standard of truth: it has all the truths of Christ inscribed upon it. If you would know the Lamb's side, then look to the banners displayed: and that banner, upon which truth is inscribed, is the banner of Zion's King: it is the standard that he is the great bearer and supporter of, who is the "Enfign of the people," and the "faithful Witneſs:" and that banner you are called in your ſtations to diſplay. Where you ſee a banner, with error inſcribed upon it, in what hands ſoever it is, it is the enemy's ſide; and you had need to keep back from it: it is the contrary ſide from Chriſt's; for there "the banner is diſplayed, becauſe of the "truth." Or where you ſee a banner, which, though it has ſome of the truths of Chriſt inſcribed upon it, yet wants many of them, many of them that are preſently denied and run down; leaving them as matters of indifferency, not worthy to be fought for, to be carneſtly contended for; that is the enemy's ſide alſo: for, ſays Chriſt, "He that is not with me, is "againſt me," Luke xi. 23. Matth. xxviii. 20. "Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I "have commanded you." But you may know Chriſt's ſide, by the banner there diſplayed, its having all the truths of Chriſt inſcribed upon it; and particularly "the preſent truth, the word of his patience," Rev. iii. 10. And where-ever you ſee that, as the Lord is making a proclamation,—"Who is on the "Lord's ſide?" thither you ſhould gather without delay; no longer ſitting ſtill among his oppoſers, leſt you ſhare in their judgments. The Lord's call is, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye "ſeparate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I "will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, "and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the "Lord Almighty," 2 Cor. vi. 17. 18. And the echo

back to his call, from all the well-wishers to the truth —to the cause of Christ, will be; "Let us go forth "therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his "reproach," Heb. xiii. 13. I go on, through divine assistance,

HEAD II.

II. "To consider the displaying of this banner. It is given, that it may be displayed."

It is to be remembered, that it is to be displayed by every one in their stations. Private Christians, as well as others, are "with the Lamb," as his soldiers, to fight his battles, Rev. xvii. 14. They, as well as others, are his "witnesses that he is God," Is. xliii. 12. But the banner is, in a special manner, to be displayed by church-officers: this is particularly committed to their trust. And here it may be observed, that,

1. The banner is to be displayed doctrinally, by every minister of the gospel, according to our Saviour's direction, Matth. xxviii. 19. 20. "Go ye "therefore, and teach all nations;—teaching them "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded "you."——Every truth is to be preached; so as ministers may have it to say, "We have not shunned "to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." They are not to keep back any part of the truth, to please men; but faithfully to bear witness to the whole of it, particularly the present truth, without regarding their feud or favour. "For do we now "persuade men, or God? or do we seek to please "men? for if we yet pleased men, we should not be "the servants of Christ," Gal. i. 10. Ministers are set "as watchmen to the house of Israel; and are to "hear the word, at the great Watchman's mouth,

" and give them warning from him," Ezek. iii. 17. And that minister, who is enabled to faithfulness, in thus displaying the banner for truth, is most likely to do good by his ministry: 1 Tim. iv. 16. " Take " heed unto thyself and unto thy doctrine; conti- " nue in them: for in doing this, thou shalt both " save thyself, and them that hear thee:" And he is most likely not to be confounded, when called to give his account. Therefore should we " study to " shew ourselves approved unto God," whose judgment is according to truth, little regarding whether men approve of us or not; " workmen that need not " be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," 2 Tim. ii. 15.

2. The banner is to be displayed judicially, by the judicatures of the church. The church-representative is the " pillar and ground of the truth," 1 Tim. iii. 15.; which no way imports, that the truth, or our faith of it, is established upon the authority of the church: this depends only upon the authority of God, the Author of it. But as pillars or stays are of use for underpropping or holding up another thing;—so the church is the pillar, the basis, or seat of the truth, as the original word imports; as, by it, the truths of God are published, supported, and defended; and in it they are only to be found, as in their proper seat or place. And as pillars were of use, in old times, to fasten upon them any public edict, which princes wanted to have exposed to the view of all; so, in the church of Christ, are the truths of God declared, and exposed to open view, that all may know them. It is said, Psal. cxxii. 4. 5. concerning Jerusalem, " Whether the tribes go up, the tribes of the " Lord, unto the testimony of Israel:—for there are " set thrones of judgment." There were there, it

would ſeem, not only the civil, but alſo the eccleſiaſtical ſanhedrim; whoſe buſineſs it was to defend and ſupport Iſrael's teſtimony: ſo, in the Jeruſalem of the goſpel-church, there are "thrones of judgment" ſet, even the judicatures of the Lord Chriſt's appointment; to whom it belongs to diſplay the banner, becauſe of the truth, and who are thus to lay themſelves out for the teſtimony of Iſrael. Eſpecially when truth is oppoſed, and a banner diſplayed againſt it,—then it belongs to church-judicatures, having ſuch a truſt as divine truth, to diſplay the banner, becauſe of the truth: which they are to do, by judicially condemning error, and judicially aſſerting truth, in terms oppoſite to thoſe in which it is oppoſed, thus giving a certain ſound; and by faithfully cenſuring them that oppoſe the truth, either by venting of, or adhering to erroneous doctrines, or by walking contrary to the truth, in their lives and converſations. We find the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira reproved, Rev. ii. for ſuffering the erroneous "to ſeduce the Lord's ſervants," and for having them among them; they having been lax in the exerciſe of diſcipline, not cutting off theſe troublers by the ſpiritual ſword. There are ſome that hurt God's witneſſes, to whom he "gives power to pro-"phеſy, clothed in ſackcloth:" and how do they hurt them? it is by oppoſing the "word of their te-"ſtimony," that truth which they diſplay the banner for. But what is to become of ſuch, you ſee, Rev. xi. 5. "And if any man will hurt them, fire "proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their "enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he muſt "in this manner be killed:" as they have the power not only of the key of doctrine, whereby the miniſters of Chriſt doctrinally denounce judgments upon the oppoſers of the truth; but alſo the key of diſ-

cipline and government, whereby they "shut hea-"ven, bind, and retain sins," in a way of inflicting censures upon such opposers, as the Lord Christ, the great Standard-bearer, has directed them; as well as they "open heaven, loose, and remit sins," by taking off these censures, upon repentance. In this respect does the Lord make, in the gospel-days, "the governors of Judah, like a hearth of fire among "the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; that "they may devour all the people round about, on "the right hand, and on the left; that Jerusalem "may be inhabited in her own place, even in Jeru-"salem;" as is promised, Zech. xii. 6.: so the banner is to be displayed both doctrinally and judicially.

We go on, through the Lord's assistance, to the next thing proposed in the method, *viz.*

HEAD III.

III. "To consider the reason of the banner's being given and displayed:—because of the truth."

As was hinted in the explication of the words, this may be considered, as having a respect either to God, or to us, to the giving or displaying of this banner.

1. It may be considered, as having a respect to God's *giving* of this banner: "Thou hast given a "banner, because of the truth:" and then we must view it, as respecting the truth of his promise unto his Son,—wherein he has engaged, that he shall have a church, a number of witnesses to appear for him and his cause; a company of soldiers to fight under his banner, in all ages; and that in spite of all that hell and earth can do to the contrary: Psal. xxii. 30.

31. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to "the Lord for a generation: they shall come, and "shall declare his righteousness to a people that shall "be born, that he hath done this." They will not only betake themselves, by faith, to his righteousness, and declare it to God, as the ground of their confidence; but also declare it to others, even "the "people that shall be born:" Psal. xlv. 17. "I will "make thy name to be remembered in all genera-"tions: therefore shall the people praise thee for "ever and ever." They will remember it believingly; and praise him, in a way of putting in their mite, for having the remembrance of it kept up in the ages to come: Psal. lxxii. 17. "His name shall endure "for ever; his name shall be continued as long as "the sun: and men shall be blessed in him; all "nations shall call him blessed." Other names will rot, will be forgotten: but this name, says JEHOVAH, "shall endure for ever:" it shall be savoury among his retinue, his army; and, from one generation to another, it will be spoken of with honour; and a banner be displayed, in defence of the glorious prerogatives that belong to him, "whose name shall last like "the sun." So, Is. lix. 21. the Father says to his eternal Son, "As for me, this is my covenant with "them, saith the Lord: my Spirit that is upon thee, "and my words, which I have put in thy mouth, shall "not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth "of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, "saith the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever." Where he pawns his faithfulness, that there shall be a succession of Christ's seed: in all generations, he shall have an army at his command; and they shall have the same spirit with their everlasting Father, the Captain of their salvation: and the effect of this will be, that his words shall be in their mouth, that they may

speak for him, and for his truths; in spite of all the malice of hell, by which the utmost endeavours are used to get their mouths stopped. So that the faithfulness of God is engaged for Christ's having an army, in all ages, to fight under his banner; and, as the accomplishment of his promises to Christ, in the church's darkest nights "the Lamb may be seen up-"on mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty "and four thousand," his little army, "having his "Father's name written upon their foreheads," Rev. xiv. 1. And his faithfulness is also engaged for the success of that army, and their victory over their enemies: for "the Lamb shall overcome them; for "he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they "that are with him," who share in his victory, "are "called, and chosen, and faithful," Rev. xvii. 14.: and so a banner is given (to be displayed) because of the truth.

2. This may be considered, as respecting the *displaying* of this banner by us in our stations: and then the truth here, is to be understood of that system of truths revealed in the word of God, the scriptures of the Old and New Testament; which are the word of truth, and the touchstone, by which all doctrines and practices are to be tried; and to be received and approved, or rejected and disapproved, according as they agree thereto, or disagree therefrom, Is. viii. 20. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak "not according to this word, it is because there is "no light in them." This word is the only rule of Faith and manners; and the truth that we are to display the banner for, is to be found there,—either in express terms, or by plain and necessary consequences, from the express words of scripture; which is the same thing: so we find our Saviour proves the

resurrection against the Sadducees, as a consequence from what the Lord said to Moses at the bush,—"I "am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, "and the God of Jacob," Mark xii. 26. And as we would discourse a little more particularly upon this part of the text, in this view, we would observe,—that the banner is to be displayed for *all* truth; and that it is, in a particular manner, to be displayed for the *present* truth.

(1.) THE banner is to be displayed for *all* truth. There is no truth little, though some have distinguished between great and little truths. Every truth is a beam and ray from the Sun of righteousness: it is as a line meeting in Christ, the Centre of all divine truth; and so there can be no denying of the truth, but what he looks upon as a denying of him. Thus the "holding fast his name, and not denying his "faith," are the same thing, Rev. ii. 13. And again, "the keeping his word, and not denying his name," chap. iii. 8. We deny not, but there are truths that lie nearer the foundation than others, and so are of a greater degree of importance; but none can be let go, without spoiling the superstructure. There is a beautiful chain of truth in the word; and if we deny one truth, we take away one link, and so break the chain, and are ready to be led on to the quitting of this and the other truth, that stands so nearly connected with it. And as there is, on the other hand, a chain of error; when we embrace one, we are ready to be led into a maze of error and absurdity, ere we are aware. We therefore had need to take the apostle's advice,—"Hold fast the form of sound words, "which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, "which is in Christ Jesus," 2 Tim. i. 13. Some, to palliate their undervaluing of truth, have distinguish-

ed the truths of God into essentials and circumstantials; and, under this head of circumstantials, rank up a number of God's valuable truths, that they look upon, as not worthy of making a noise about, and contending for. But there is no truth circumstantial. Though we do not say, that the belief and persuasion of every truth revealed is essential to salvation; yet there is no known truth, but is essential to the declarative glory of God, and is of more worth than the lives of all that ever breathed in God's air; and therefore is well worth the contending for, though in a way, "of resisting even unto blood:" and our appearing for what others may look upon as a little, a circumstantial truth only, especially when it is called in question,—is necessary, in order to our glorifying God upon the earth. Christ was a valiant witness for the truth; and confirmed his testimony with his blood, as well as thereby made attonement for our sins: and it is the honour of his disciples, to follow the foot-steps of their Lord and Master, the great Standard-bearer, boldly confessing the truth, and every part of it; and as called thereto, sealing it with their blood. So the banner is is to be displayed for *all* truth.—But if it be enquired, more particularly, what are those truths we are to display the banner for? we answer, There are truths respecting the *doctrines* to be believed; truths respecting the *worship* to be received and observed; truths respecting the *government* and *discipline* to be exercised in the church; and truths respecting Christian *practice*, or the duties to be performed by church-members: for all which the banner is to be displayed. We cannot enlarge upon these, without encroaching upon your time; only a few hints to each.

1. There are truths respecting the *doctrines* to be believed, for which the banner is to be displayed;

for these doctrinal truths, among many others, *viz.* That God made man upright, after his image, Gen. i. 26. "And God said, Let us make man in our "image, after our likeness. verse. 27. So God created "man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." Eccl. vii. 29. "Lo, this have I "found, that God hath made man upright."—That there was a proper covenant entered into by God with Adam; in which he stood, not as a private person, but as a public head, representing all his posterity, descending from him by ordinary generation; according to Gen. ii. 16. 17. "And the Lord God "commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of "the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree "of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not "eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, "thou shalt surely die." Compared with Rom. v. 12. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the "world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon "all men, for that all have sinned." 1 Cor. xv. 22. "For in Adam all die." Which plainly point out a federal representation of all mankind by the first Adam.

The banner is to be displayed for the truth concerning man's fall, by the breach of the covenant of works; and concerning original sin, both imputed and inherent, with which all Adam's posterity are chargeable; which is the root and fountain of all actual transgression: Gen. iii. 6. "And when the wo-"man saw that the tree was good for food, and that "it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desi-"red to make one wise; she took of the fruit there-"of, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband "with her, and he did eat." Chap. v. 3. "Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image."

Rom. v. 12. "By one man sin entered into the world; "—and so death passed upon all men, for that all have "sinned." Psal. li. 5. "Behold, I was shapen in ini- "quity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."—The truth concerning man's utter inability to help himself out of that estate of sin and misery. Hos. xiii. 9. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." Rom. v. 6. "When we were yet without strength, in "due time Christ, died for the ungodly."——The doctrine concerning the making of the covenant of grace, between God the Father, as the party-con- tractor upon heaven's side,—and God the Son, as the party-contractor on man's side, from all eternity, for the recovery of a certain company of Adam's ruined family. Psal. lxxxix. 3. "I have made a co- "venant with my chosen; I have sworn unto David "my servant." Prov. viii. 23. says Christ, "I was "set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or e- "ver the earth was."——This truth, that God e- lected a certain company of Adam's family, from all eternity, out of his mere good pleasure; and gave them to Christ, to be redeemed by him: and that he represented them, and them only, in this covenant- transaction. John xvii. 6. "I have manifested thy "name unto the men which thou gavest me out of "the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them "me." Eph. i. 4. 5. "According as he hath "chosen us in him, before the foundation of the "world, that we should be holy, and without blame "before him in love: having predestinated us unto "the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to him- "self, according to the good pleasure of his will."— The truth concerning the Divinity of the person of Christ, the Mediator between God and man; being, though a distinct person from the Father, yet the same God with the Father, the true and supreme

JEHOVAH: John i. 1. "The Word was God." 1 John v. 20. "His Son Jesus Christ: this is the "true God and eternal life." Jer. xxiii. 6. "This is "the name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR "RIGHTEOUSNESS."——The truth concerning his actual incarnation, that he might fulfil the condition of the covenant, Gal. iv. 4. "But when the fulness "of the time was come, God sent forth his Son "made of a woman, made under the law:" assuming our nature into a personal union with his divine nature, that he might satisfy God in the same nature that sinned: in whose person these natures are most strictly united, without any mixture or confusion, he being still "Emmanuel, God with us."——The doctrine concerning his fulfilling the condition of the covenant, in fulfilling all righteousness, as the surety of the better testament; by the holiness of his nature, the righteousness of his life, and the satisfaction and atonement he made for sin, in his death and sufferings: according to what was prophesied of him, Dan. ix. 24. "Seventy week are "determined——to finish the transgression, and to "make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for "iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness:" and to what is recorded concerning his birth, life and death, by the evangelists.

THE banner is to be displayed for the truth, concerning the objective extent of the death and satisfaction of Christ; in its extending as far as, and no further than God's eternal decree of election, John xvii. 6. 19. "The men which thou gavest me out of "the world;—for their sakes I sanctify myself." Extending as far, and no further, in its destination as to its objects, than those to whom it shall in due time be certainly applied, Is. liii. 8. "For the transgression

" of my people was he ſtricken :" compared with Pſal. cx. 3. " Thy people," which are the ſame with the people mentioned in the former ſcripture, " ſhall " be willing in the day of thy power." Iſ. liii. 11. " He ſhall ſee of the travel of his ſoul, and ſhall be " ſatisfied : by his knowledge ſhall my righteous Ser- " vant juſtify many : for he ſhall bear their iniqui- " ties." Where it is evident, that it was their iniquities he bore, who are juſtified by his knowledge ; that is, by the knowledge of him, or faith in him : and that there is a certain infallible connection between Chriſt's ſuſtaining the perſons of any in bearing their iniquities, and the juſtification of their perſons, through his perfect righteouſneſs. Though in ſome ſcriptures there are very univerſal terms uſed, with reſpect to the objects of Chriſt's death ; yet theſe muſt be viewed according to the connection in which they ſtand, and compared with other ſcriptures relative to the ſame ſubject : from which it will evidently appear, that it is the univerſality of the elect of that world of which they ſpeak. As there are univerſal expreſſions in ſcripture, with reſpect to the atonement in Chriſt's death, and the purchaſe of redemption thereby ; ſo there are as univerſal expreſſions reſpecting its application ; as when it is ſaid, " And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw " all men unto me," John xii. 32. " By the righ- " teouſneſs of one, the free gift came upon all men " to juſtification of life," Rom. v. 18. " In Chriſt " ſhall all be made alive," 1 Cor. xv. 22. And if there be a neceſſity of underſtanding the univerſal expreſſions, with reſpect to the former, of all mankind,—there is the ſame neceſſity with reſpect to the latter : and ſo we ſhall not only have an univerſal redemption, but an univerſal ſalvation ; which they that ſtand up for univerſal redemption themſelves, will not maintain. And indeed, unleſs it could be main-

tained, that Christ died for all men, so as to save them;—that doctrine of universal redemption, or of Christ's having died, in some sense, for all, is but a heartless doctrine, bearing nothing of comfort in it to perishing sinners. And besides, it must land us in the grossest absurdities; while it must lead us either to a frustrated redemption, and to say that Christ shed his blood in vain, and to no purpose, as to the most part for whom he laid down his life,—who are to be eternally satisfying justice in hell for their sins, notwithstanding of Christ's having satisfied for them: or it must lead us to a conditional redemption; and so the whole Arminian doctrine of man's free-will, so opposite to the doctrine of God's free grace, must be introduced. Or, if both these should be denied, then we must, according to this scheme, inevitably land in alledging, that Christ died intentionally, to bring the most part of those he died for under a greater condemnation; and that in this he sees "the "travel of his soul;" and so make his death, as to the greatest part of its objects, to flow from the greatest hatred instead of the greatest love; than which nothing is more contrary to the word of God: "For God sent not his Son into the world "to condemn the world, but that the world "through him might be saved," John iii. 17. It was because "Christ loved the church, that he gave "himself for it," Eph. v. 25. And the "travel of "his soul" is seen, not in the condemnation of any, but in the "justification of many, by his know-"ledge," Is. liii. 11.

THE banner is to be displayed for the truth, respecting the administration of the covenant, to sinners of mankind, in the everlasting gospel; wherein Christ is set forth as a sufficient Saviour, suitable to the case

and neceſſities of loſt ſinners; as clothed with all ſaving offices, being the Prophet, Prieſt, and King of God's anointing and appointing; and, as ſuch, is offered to mankind-ſinners without exception, to every one that hears the joyful ſound: John iii. 16. "For "God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only-be-"gotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him "ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life." Iſ. xlv. 22. "Look unto me, and be ye ſaved, all the "ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is "none elſe." Chap. lv. 1. "Ho, every one that "thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath "no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy "wine and milk, without money and without price." Rev. xxii. 17. "Whoſoever will, let him take the "water of life freely." And here the warrant to mankind-ſinners to believe is founded. It is not founded upon the deſtination of the death of Chriſt for any, in God's decree; nor upon any intention of his, as to the objects thereof, in giving this ſatisfaction: but upon the infinite value of the price paid, by a divine perſon, in the human nature; in which reſpect he ſtands equally related to the family of mankind, being God in their nature: and, upon the exhibition of this Saviour, and his ſalvation, to mankind-ſinners, as ſuch in the goſpel, as ſufficient for them, and ſuitable to their caſe; with the divine authority in the command, obliging them to receive him, and believe on him for their ſalvation; together with abſolute promiſes of life and ſalvation through Chriſt to mankind-ſinners as ſuch: the poſſeſſion of which bleſſedneſs is to be obtained in the way of believing. Thus it was that Peter's hearers founded their faith, Acts ii.; while they were not told of any deſtination of Chriſt's death for them; but that this ſufficient Saviour, and his righteouſneſs, was exhi-

lited to them in the word of grace and promise, ver. 38. 39. 41. " Repent, and be baptized every one of " you in the name of Jesus Christ: for the promise " is unto you, and to your children, and to all that " are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God " shall call. Then they that gladly received his " word were baptized." Thus the apostle founded his faith, 1 Tim. i. 15. " This is a faithful saying, " and worthy of all acceptation; that Christ Jesus " came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am " chief." It is God's revealed, not his secret will, that founds the warrant for our faith. But as to the objects of God's electing love, or those for whom Christ died, which is the same thing that belongs to his secret will; and " secret things belong unto the Lord " our God; but those things which are revealed be- " long unto us," Deut. xxix. 29. As a traveller's warrant, to make use of the provision brought to his hand, is not founded upon its being destined for him, and prepared with a view to him, and his knowing so much; but upon this, that provision of an exact suitableness to his need is set before him, and he is invited to make use thereof: so neither is our warrant to improve Christ and his righteousness, founded upon this righteousness being wrought out in our room and stead; but upon this, that " unto us a Son " is given," whose name is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS: that in the gospel he " brings near this " righteousness," that we may, by the hand of faith, take hold of it, and put it on, Is. xlvi. 13.

THE banner is to be displayed for the doctrine concerning the necessity of faith for closing with Christ; and so becoming interested in him, and the blessings purchased by his death: for " we are saved " through faith," Eph. ii. 8.; and " without faith

" it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6. It is faith that lays hold upon the person of Christ, that matches with the Heir of heaven; and so it is in the way of believing we are interested in that inheritance, of which Christ is the prime Heir, as God's first-born. The fruits of Christ's death, cannot be intermeddled with but by faith. As it is by faith only we are instated in the covenant of grace, so thereby only can we receive blessings, as coming through the channel of that covenant: but the fruits of Christ's death can be conveyed in no other channel but the channel of this well-ordered covenant. All mankind are under one of the two covenants. They that are strangers to Christ are under the covenant of works; and so, even the good things they enjoy come to them with the curse of that broken covenant: Job xxiv. 18. the wicked man's portion is said to be " cursed in the earth." But nothing that Christ hath purchased, can be conveyed with the curse upon it: so that none out of Christ can partake of the fruits of Christ's death; nor can ever any possess them, but in the way of believing, and of enjoying Christ himself; for Christ and his purchase can never be divided.

The banner is to be displayed for the truth, concerning the necessity of a day of power; in order to work faith in us, and thereby unite us to Christ: John vi. 44. " No man can come to me, except the " Father which hath sent me, draw him."—The truth concerning our justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, without the works of the law, Rom. v. 1. Gal. ii. 16. " Knowing that a man " is not justified by the works of the law, but by " the faith of Jesus-Christ." Acts xiii. 39. " By him " all that believe are justified from all things, from

" which ye could not be justified by the law of Mo-
" ses."—The truth concerning our sanctification by the operation of the Spirit of Christ; the beginning and progress of which, is the sure and infallible evidence of the person's justification: 1 Cor. vi. 11. " Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified; " in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit " of our God." Rom. viii. 1.: they to whom " there " is no condemnation," that is, are justified, being in Christ Jesus,—do evidence it, by " walking not " after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—The truth concerning the influence that the doctrine of the grace of God in Christ believed, has upon the soul for its sanctification: " For the grace of God that " bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; teach-
" ing us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly " lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and god-
" ly in this present world," Tit. ii. 11. 12.—The doctrine concerning the necessity of holiness in heart and life, " without which no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. Its necessity, not as a condition, or any meritorious cause of our salvation; but as an evidence of our gratitude unto God, and as a great part of that salvation obtained by his grace: and so the necessity of experiencing the power of the doctrine of the gospel, as indeed a doctrine according to godliness.

But we cannot insist upon the various doctrines to be believed, for which the banner is to be displayed. All the doctrines revealed in the word, are truths for which the banner is to be displayed; all the doctrines concerning the nature, perfections, and works of God; concerning the great ruin by sin, and the great relief by Christ; concerning the con-

trivance, purchase, application, and consummation of redemption, through our Lord Jesus.

(2.) There are truths respecting the *worship* to be received and observed in the church, for which the banner is to be displayed. For the truths respecting the *matter* of our worship: that God is to be worshipped by the ordinances of his own institution in the word; such as prayer, praise, reading, preaching, and hearing the word; dispensing and receiving the sacraments of his appointment; religious swearing, and the like; none having power to appoint ordinances, or means of worship, but the Lord himself,—who alone "is our Judge, our Law-giver, "our King, and will save us," Is. xxxiii. 22.—— And not only for the truths respecting the *matter*, but the *manner* of our worship also: that he is to be worshipped with grace in the heart, by a Mediator, in such a manner as he himself has appointed for going about the duties of his worship; rejecting all the inventions of men, either as to the matter or manner of our worship, as being nothing but will-worship: "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doc- "trines the commandments of men," Mat. xv. 9. To admit what they call significant ceremonies of mens invention into the worship of God, is to deny that Christ has dealt prudently in the ordinances he has instituted, and the directions he has given as to our worship, as the great Law-giver of the church. It is observable, that, in the reasons annexed to the second commandment, God declares the breakers of this commandment *such as hate him*, which expression we find not in any other of the commandments; while yet they pretend the greatest love to God, and regard for his honour; alledging, their inventing and proposing the observance of such and such

things in our worſhip, is for the greater decency, reverence, or the like. But as the banner is to be diſplayed for the purity of doctrine, ſo alſo for the purity of worſhip.

(3.) THERE are truths reſpecting the government and diſcipline to be exerciſed in the church, for which the banner is to be diſplayed. For this truth, that Chriſt is the alone King and Head of his church, Iſ. ix. 6. "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is "given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoul-"der." Pſal. ii. 6. "Yet have I ſet my King upon "my holy hill of Zion." Eph. i. 22. "And gave "him to be the Head over all things to the church:" And therefore he is the alone fountain of all church power and authority: from him alone it is derived. "As my Father hath ſent me, even ſo I ſend you," John xx. 21.——For this truth, that Chriſt, as King and Head of his church, has appointed office-bearers in his houſe: 1 Cor. xii. 28. "And God hath ſet "ſome in the church, firſt, apoſtles; ſecondarily, pro-"phets; thirdly, teachers; after that, miracles; then "gifts of healings, helps, governments, diverſities of "tongues." Eph. iv. 11. "And he gave ſome, a-"poſtles; and ſome, prophets; and ſome, evange-"liſts; and ſome, paſtors and teachers." The extraordinary officers are ceaſed; but there are ordinary officers, who are to continue in ſucceſſion in the church, till the end of the world; and who may expect his preſence in the diſcharge of their offices, in all ages: Matth. xxviii. 20. "Lo, I am with you al-"way, even unto the end of the world. Amen." And theſe are paſtors or teachers, (there being no ſtanding office ſuperior to that in the church, of Chriſt's inſtitution); and alſo ruling-elders and deacons; as appears from the ſcriptures above cited,

compared with 1 Tim. v. 17. where there is an elder spoken of, as an officer in the church, distinct from the pastor or elder "that labours in word "and doctrine:" and Acts vi. where we see the deacon's office also is of divine institution, and a standing office in the church.——For this truth, that Christ hath given to church-officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven: Matth. xvi. 19. and xviii. 18. "And I will give unto thee the keys of the king-"dom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on "earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever "thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in hea-"ven." And that this was not spoken to Peter only, but also to the rest of the apostles equally with him, appears from the other place cited: "Verily I "say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, "shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall "loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." There is no word of giving this trust to the civil magistrate; but it is given to church-officers, the apostles, and their successors in office, to the end of the world; even the ordinary office-bearers in the church. Nor is it given to the community of the faithful; for then all were rulers, and where were the ruled? but to certain officers of the Lord's appointment, to bear rule over them. There is the key of doctrine, which every pastor has the power of; having authority to preach the word, to dispense the sacraments, and jointly to determine matters of faith: Matth. xxviii. 19. "Go teach all nations, baptizing them," *&c.* 1 Cor. xi. 23.——And there is the key of government and discipline, to be exercised by the officers of the church *in colliegio*, ministers and elders met togegether in Christ's name: Matth. xviii. 17. 18. 20. "If he neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church. "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on

" earth, shall be bound in heaven:—For where two " or three are gathered together in my name, there " am I in the midst of them." So the apostle speaks of a " power given to us for edification," 2 Cor. x. 8.——And so, for this truth, that there are courts of judgment appointed by Christ to meet in his name, for ordering the affairs of his house, particularly, for the exercise of government and discipline; as sessions, presbyteries, and synods provincial, national, or œcumenical, in a due subordination: which may be gathered from the consideration of the churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, &c. where different congregations, which had their own office-bearers, were under one presbytery: and Acts xv. we find the officers of different churches meet in one synod.——For this truth, that these judicatures have power to inflict censures upon them that are guilty of error, either in principle or practice; as admonitions, rebukes, suspension from the sacraments, and excommunication: and with respect to church-officers, besides those censures just now mentioned, that affect them as Christians, to proceed against them by suspension from the exercise of their office, and deposition or deprivation of the office; as appears from Tit. iii. 10. 1 Tim. v. 20. Matth. xviii. 17. 18. All which have been cleared by eminent divines; and may be found laid down and proved from the Lord's word, in the Form of Presbyterial Church-government, agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and received by this church as a part of her standards.——The truth respecting the government of Christ's house, is not to be looked upon as light and trivial: it nearly concerns the declarative glory of God, and the honour of Christ, the King and Head of the church. Christ himself particularly bore witness to his own kingly office, when Pilate asked him, " Art thou a King?

" Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King. To " this end was I born, and for this cause came I into " the world, that I should bear witness unto the " truth," John xviii. 37. And so he is said to have " witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate," 1 Tim. vi. 13. And for this many of his servants and people, particularly in this land, have " not lo- " ved their lives to the death;" but have boldly sealed a testimony to the truth, concerning Christ's kingly authority and royal prerogatives, concerning the government of his house, with their blood.

(4.) THERE are truths respecting Christian *practice*, or the duties to be performed by church-members, for which the banner is to be displayed: all which duties are contained in the precepts of the moral law; which is a perfect rule, and of perpetual obligation. Our Saviour sums up the whole law in two commandments: " Thou shalt love the Lord thy " God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and " with all thy mind: this is the first and great com- " mandment. And the second is like unto it; thou " shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two " commandments hang all the law and the prophets," Matth. xxii. 37.—40. The law points out both our duty to God, and to our neighbour; and the banner is to be displayed for truth, in a way of pointing out to church-members those duties required of them: and particularly it is to be displayed for these truths upon this head:——that the leading duty required is faith in the Son of God; which can never miss of influence upon both heart and conversation. " This " is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom " he hath sent," John vi. 29. " This is his command- " ment, that we believe on the name of his Son Je- " sus Christ," 1 John iii. 23. It is the leading good

work, without which, we can do no work that is good and acceptable in the sight of God. Faith unites to Christ, from whom our fruit is found: faith matches with this one Husband, "that we may bring forth "fruit unto God," Rom. vii. 4.——For this truth, that our works and duties must spring from a new nature; for if the tree is not good, neither are the fruits: and so from a principle of faith in Christ, and love to God,—and not from the principle of self-love: for while our duties spring from this, we are but "empty vines, bringing forth fruit to ourselves," Hos. x. 1.——For this truth, that they must be directed to the glory of God, as their end; seeking to have him exalted, and his declarative glory advanced: for if "the eye is not single," however strict the profession be, and however moral and blameless the conversation; "the whole body is but full of darkness." Though a work be materially good, and commanded in the law; yet it is not properly a good work, unless it spring from a right principle, and be directed to a right end. An unrenewed man's duties are but so many splendid sins. "The prayer of the wicked "is an abomination to the Lord;" and so are all his sacrifices, Prov. xxi. 27. and xxviii. 9.——For this truth,—that in going about the duties which the Lord requires of us, either in the first or second table of the law, either toward God, or toward our neighbour; we must depend upon the grace of Christ for our assistance, and upon the righteousness of Christ, as the alone ground of the acceptance, both of our persons and performances, even the best of them, Psal. lxxi. 16. Eph. i. 6.——The church, particularly church-officers, are to be concerned to have sound doctrines maintained, a pure worship observed, and a strict discipline exercised in the church; and to lay themselves out for having holiness promoted among

church-members; faithfully displaying the banner, because of all the truths respecting each of these, both doctrinally and judicially: and being ready to censure such as deviate from them in principle or practice, according as the great Law-giver hath appointed; "having in a readiness to revenge all diso-"bedience, when their obedience is fulfilled," 2 Cor. x. 6.——So the banner is to be displayed for all truth. But it was further observed, that,

2. THE banner is to be displayed, particularly for the present truth. We read of "the present truth," 2 Pet. i. 12. and of the "word of Christ's patience," Rev. iii. 10. That truth, which is presently opposed and run down, is the present truth; which we are called, in a particular manner, presently to assert, maintain, and defend, to display the banner for. That is the "word of his patience;" as those who adhere to it, are exposed to such trials, that they need much patience for suitably bearing them. Whatever is the present truth, that should the church especially display the banner for; be it Christ's being the true Messiah, as in the days of his flesh: be it his supreme Deity, as was the case when the Arian heresy prevailed; and as was the case in this land of late, when it was impugned and denied: be it Christ's alone Headship over his church, and the government of his house,——as was the case in the late persecuting times in this land, (and is much the case at this day; as Christ's alone Headship is denied, and the government of his house run down): be it the people's right to chuse their own office-bearers: be it the objective extent of Christ's death, as at present. Whatever truth it be that is presently controverted and opposed, that should we be especially established in; and that should be especially contended for. The banner is most vigorously to be displayed, and there the army are to

take moſt ſpecial care to ſtand their ground, where the oppoſition is hotteſt from the enemy; leſt they ſhould prevail. When truth is oppoſed, what are the oppoſers doing? They are eſſaying, with all their might, to have the church robbed of her treaſure, of her jewels, the truths of Chriſt; but then eſpecially are they to hold faſt what they have,——and to evidence that this character belongs unto them, "the "nation that keepeth the truth," Iſ. xxvi. 2. I go on,

HEAD IV.

IV. "To confirm the doctrine; or, to ſhew, that a banner given to be diſplayed becauſe of the truth, is matter of praiſe to all the well-wiſhers of truth. And that it is ſo, and that they will improve it as ſuch, may appear from theſe following conſiderations," *viz.*

1. CONSIDERING that it is an evidence of the Lord's being among a people, being yet in a land, where a banner is given to be diſplayed becauſe of the truth; the Lord has taken up his dwelling in his church; he has ſaid of Zion, "This is my reſt; here will I "ſtay; for I have deſired it:" and how ſhall we know where his church is? It is where the banner is diſplayed for truth. Though the "enemy come in "like a flood," yet, when he meets with oppoſition and contradiction, the ſtandard of a teſtimony "be-"ing lifted up," it is a ſign that the Lord is there by his Spirit; for it is "the Spirit of the Lord that "ſhall lift up a ſtandard againſt him," Iſ. lix. 19. When a church departs from truth, that provokes the Lord to depart from them: Iſ. lix. 2. "Your "iniquities have ſeparated between you and your "God;" and among others of their iniquities that had provoked him to leave them, this is one, verſ. 14.

" Truth is fallen in the ſtreet, and equity cannot en-
" ter." But where truth is maintained, where " the
" faith, once delivered to the ſaints, is earneſtly con-
" tended for;" that is a ſign, that the name of that city, that place, is JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH, " The Lord
" is there;" he is there, pleading the cauſe that is his own. And what ground of praiſe is this, when there is any evidence given, that the " Lord is yet in
" the midſt of Iſrael; and that Judah hath not been
" forſaken of her God, the Lord of hoſts, though
" their land was filled with ſin againſt the holy One
" of Iſrael?"

2. CONSIDERING that this is for the glory of God, that the banner be diſplayed becauſe of truth. It is for the glory of the Father; for he is the God of truth, and his " eyes are upon the truth," Jer. v. 3.; and upon all profeſſors, to ſee how they ſtand affected to, and how they lay themſelves out, for the advancement of truth. It is for the honour of Chriſt, his eternal Son, who is the truth; every truth being as a line drawn from himſelf, the Centre of divine truth, that, as has been hinted, we cannot let go the faith, without denying his name. It is for the glory of God the Holy Ghoſt, who is " the Spirit of truth;" and is ſent into the church, to " lead her into all truth." So that the glory of the Three-one God is concerned in this. All the well-wiſhers of truth have the glory of God much at heart: it is the thing they chiefly deſire, to have the burden of his praiſe lifted up: they muſt ſurely then look upon it as matter of praiſe, and improve it as ſuch, when a banner is given to be diſplayed becauſe of the truth.

3. CONSIDERING the ineſtimable value of divine truth. How precious, how valuable the truth is,

cannot be told! it is so valuable, that we should buy it at any rate, and sell it at no rate, Prov. xxiii. 23. And so we are commanded "to contend earnestly for "the faith, Jude 3.; to contend as one in an agony, striving for that which is of the utmost value; the loss of which would inevitably impoverish him. The truth is the greatest treasure that can be in a land, among a people; so that it is the worst thing that can fall out in a land, to let truth go: it is the worst bargain a people can make, to sell it; whatever riches, honours, and pretended peace they should get in exchange for it. But it is indeed a happy thing, when there are found to take it by the hand: when, in a land, there is to be found a "nation which keepeth the truth," among whom a banner is to be found displayed for truth. And this cannot but be viewed, as ground of thankfgiving, by all that love the truth, and Zion's righteous cause.

4. Considering that hereby there is a faithful testimony for Christ's cause transmitted to posterity. It is the duty of the present generation to have the rising generation, the succeeding race, upon their heart; and to be laying out themselves for handing down to them the truths of God: Psal. lxxviii. 5. 6. 7. 8. "For he established a testimony in Jacob, and "appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our "fathers, that they should make them known to their "children: that the generation to come might know "them, even the children which should be born; who "should arise, and declare them to their children: "that they might set their hope in God, and not for-"get the works of God; but keep his command-"ments: and might not be as their Fathers, a stub-"born and rebellious generation; a generation that "set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not

"stedfast with God." So the command is, Psal. xlviii. 12. 13. "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: "tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bul- "warks; consider her palaces:" and wherefore all this diligence? "That ye may tell it to the genera- "tion following." And the promise is, Psal. xxii. 31. "They shall declare his righteousness, to a peo- "ple that shall be born." They are not friends to posterity that are enemies to the cause of Christ, and the displaying a banner because of the truth:—as they are denying them the means of the knowledge of Christ's cause; and doing what they can, that they may be brought up in ignorance of the truth, and "of what great things the Lord hath done for us." But surely it is ground of praise, when the Lord enables his remnant so to act;—as they may tell posterity about his works, his cause; so as they may tell them, that "this God is our God for ever and "ever:" that, by the Lord's blessing the means, a race may be raised up to praise him when we are gone. And however many should consent, for their part, that the succeeding generation be kept ignorant of these things; yet we have ground to rejoice, that the Lord will have them informed, will have the testimony transmitted; and no fear he want instruments: the promise shall be accomplished: "This shall be "written," or upon record, "for the generation to "come; and the people which shall be created, shall "praise the Lord," Psal. cii. 18.

5. Considering that a banner given to be displayed, because of the truth, in a land,—is not only an evidence that the Lord is in that land, but a token for good that he will not leave it. It is true, famous churches have had their houses left unto them desolate; and we dare not be too positive, but the Lord

may yet unchurch us, as he has done others. But yet are there not some "tokens for good;" some encouragements to hope, that however the Lord may shake us in these lands, and dash us, one against another, because of our sins,—that he will not utterly cast us off for all that? While we consider the early grant made to Christ, even from of old, from everlasting; of "the Heathen for his inheritance, and "the utmost ends of the earth for his possession," Psal. ii. 8.: and his early taking infeftment and possession of them, in so soon enlightening them with the glorious gospel, and early bringing them into covenant with himself: when we consider his maintaining his cause in them, amidst the darkest times; that there were still some vestiges of his work among us, something of a standard lifted up, a banner displayed, something of contradiction to the burial of his cause; which he has been pleased to revive, time after time, when brought very low,—many time delivering us. And add to all this, the fervent prayers of his saints, of his wrestlers in these lands, that he would not utterly reject us, and cast us off: "For he "will regard the prayer of the destitute; he will not "despise their prayer," Psal. cii. 17. And seeing it is such a token for good, surely the well-wishers of truth will look upon it as matter of praise, when a banner is given to be displayed because of the truth. I proceed,

HEAD V.

V. "To make some application of the subject; and that in a few inferences."

From this doctrine, we may see,

1. That true Israelites are of a public spirit: they are not only taken up about themselves and their

their own ſalvation, but alſo about God's declarative glory, about the cauſe of truth. Indeed true religion begins at home, with a *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* But where grace is really implanted, and led forth into exerciſe, that perſon will not be neutral and indifferent about the public cauſe: "Wo to them that "are at eaſe in Zion; that are not grieved for the "afflictions of Joſeph," Amos vi. 1. 6. Rightly-exerciſed Chriſtians will indeed be grieved when truth ſuffers;——and when they that are minting to appear for it, in a way of diſplaying their banners, are ſuffering: "They are ſorrowful for the ſolemn aſſem-"bly; to them the reproach thereof is a burden," Zeph. iii. 18. And they rejoice when truth keeps the field, when the banner is ſupported and maintained; eſſaying to caſt in their mite, for lifting up the burden of his praiſe: "In the name of our God "we will ſet up our banners," Pſal. xx. 5.

2. We may hence infer, that the Lord will ſee to his own work. "Thou haſt given a banner:" it is the Lord that gives it, that ſupports it, that gathers his army about it, and enables to diſplay it. The work is not left in the hands of inſtruments, or it would ſoon ceaſe: how eaſily would they be let and hindered in it, by the oppoſition and contradiction they meet with? But "I will work," ſays Jehovah, "and who ſhall let it?" Iſ. xliii. 13. He deſies the devil and all his agents, however formidable they may appear; however many banners they may diſplay, to let and hinder his work: the hand of Jehovah holds up the ſtandard. A Trinity of Perſons are with the church, to carry on the good work there, Hag. ii. 4. 5. "Be ſtrong and work; "for I am with you, ſaith the Lord of hoſts: ac-"cording to the word which I covenanted with you,

" when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remain-
" eth among you: fear ye not." These words *according to*, in the beginning of verse 5. are a supplement; and without them it reads, " I am with you, " saith the Lord; the word which I covenanted with " you," (which may point out Christ, often called the *Word* in scripture), " so my Spirit remaineth among " you." The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is in the church: for the name of the city is, *The Lord is there.* Christ, the Head of the church, is there; for " Zion's King is in her; her Counsellor " is not perished;" he is there, the " Standard-bear-
" er among ten thousand:" there to work;——" for " my Father worketh hitherto, and I work," John v. 17. And the Spirit is there; for, says Christ, " The Spirit of truth, he shall abide with you for " ever." And seeing the Lord is in the church, no doubt but he will maintain the banner given, to the terror of his adversaries; making his army victorious, while their enemies shall faint and fall before him: Is. x. 17. " And the Light of Israel shall be for a " fire, and his holy One for a flame: and it shall " burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one " day." And verse 18. " They shall be as when a " standard-bearer fainteth." As the pillar of cloud, when it removed behind Israel, and so was between them and the Egyptians, was a light to Israel, and darkness to their enemies the Egyptians; so, when the Lord is a Light to his Israel, to his army, to direct them and comfort them in his work,——he will be as a *fire* and *flame*, to burn up their enemies, who are to him as *briers* and *thorns* before a devouring fire. And the work will be all his, and appear to be so; that it shall from that time " be said of Jacob and of " Israel, What hath God wrought!"

3. Hence see the duty of the watchmen upon mount Ephraim, of office-bearers in the house of God. They, in a special manner, are to display a banner because of the truth, to defend it, to contend for it. And particularly, when any truth is opposed; and that not only when gross error, in opposition thereto, is plainly vented, but when, in a more deceitful way, it may be secretly thrust at; then it becomes the watchmen to give warning from their glorious Captain, unto the army of the Lamb, of their danger,—and to set about a vigorous "display" "ing of the banner because of the truth," presently struck at and opposed. Heresies ordinarily "creep in unawares," and under plausible pretences too; as if the admitting this and the other notion would tend more to solve this and the other difficulty. And the truth is, error cannot well set up its head, without assuming some dress of this nature; because it cannot, like God's truth, abide the light. But when it is introduced under such shams, and timely notice is not taken by the watchmen, and timely warning given; the Lamb's army are ready to be broke in upon, and many are ready to fall a prey to devourers. And seeing this is our duty, as office-bearers in the Lord's house, to display the banner for truth; there are several things we had need to seek acquaintance with, in order to our being fitted for the performance of this our duty.

(1.) We had need to seek the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus; and, for this end, to be about Christ's hand, for his own teaching: "If so be," says the apostle, "that ye have heard him, and have "been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus," Eph. iv. 21. And, says Christ, John viii. 32. "Ye "shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you

"free." We cannot suitably testify for what we do not know. And, in order to this, our main study should be the truth, as it is contained in the volume of God's book, the scriptures of truth; daily searching them, and "trying the spirits by them:" and withal seeking such a knowledge of the truth, as will have influence upon our hearts and conversations.

(2.) We had need to seek the faith of the truth; without which we cannot well appear for it. There is a "receiving of the truth that we may be saved," which we had need to be acquainted with. If we have the faith of the truth, we will see its glory and excellency: such a value and preciousness of the truth, as we will be ready to lose all, rather than let it go. Mens light thoughts of the truth flow from their want of faith.

(3.) We had need of love to the truth: there is to be a "receiving the love of the truth," 2 Thess. ii. 10. Love to Christ is very necessary in his ministers, and to the "truth as it is in Jesus." We are exhorted to "love the truth and the peace," Zech. viii. 19. We are to love God's truth, and cleave unto it at all hazards; to love Jerusalem's peace, and pursue it in such a way, as may evidence our love to the truth.

(4.) We had need of zeal for the truth: and according to our measure of faith of, and love to the truth, will be the measure of our zeal for it. Our Lord exhorts a coldrife lukewarm church, Rev. iii. 19. "Be zealous therefore, and repent." The want of zeal is complained of in the people of old: "They "are not valiant for the truth upon the earth," Jer.

ix. 3. The apoſtle tells us, it "is good to be zea-"louſly affected in a good cauſe;" and a better cauſe never can be than the cauſe of truth. But, in order to all this,

(5.) We had need to ſeek the Spirit of truth. Need we the knowledge of the truth? Then "he is "the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, in the know-"ledge of Chriſt," Eph. i. 17.; and it is promiſed of him, "he ſhall teach you all things." Need we the faith of the truth? Then he is the Spirit of faith, 2 Cor. iv. 13. "We having received the——Spirit "of faith, have believed, and therefore ſpoken." Need we love to the truth? Then he is the "Spirit "of love, and of a ſound mind," 2 Tim. i. 7.; he kindles the fire of love in the ſoul to Chriſt and his truth. Need we zeal for the truth? Then he that kindles the fire of love in the heart, makes it flame in a holy zeal. He is the "Spirit of power," as in the forecited ſcripture, 2 Tim. i. 7. and magnanimity, to enable us to make a zealous and bold appearance for Chriſt's borne-down cauſe: and as we may lay our account with trials in a way of cleaving to the truth, we need the Spirit as a Comforter, to ſupport and carry through, in a way of rejoicing in tribulation. Well, as we need the Spirit, it is ground of encouragement that he is promiſed; and the accompliſhment of the promiſe may be expected: John xiv. 16. 17. "I will pray the Father, and he ſhall "give you another Comforter, that he may abide "with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.—— "He dwelleth with you, and ſhall be in you." Chap xv. 26. 27. "When the Comforter is come, "whom I will ſend unto you from the Father, even "the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the "Father, he ſhall teſtify of me: and ye alſo ſhall

"bear witneſs." Chap. xvi. 7. 13. "If I depart, "I will ſend him unto you. When the Spirit "truth is come, he will guide you into all truth."

4. HENCE ſee the warrantableneſs of the contendings of a remnant at this day for truth. When the cauſe of Chriſt was buried in the land, and grave-ſtones of acts of parliament and of aſſemblies were rolled to the door of the ſepulchre, and all means for reforming them proved abortive; what a ſad ſituation had we been in, had not the Lord led out a remnant in his providence, "without the camp, "bearing his reproach," to take truth by the hand; and "given them a banner," enabling them to make ſome mints at diſplaying the ſame, becauſe of the truth? And the Lord has been leading them on to appear for truth, from time to time, when oppoſed upon different hands; for the doctrine, the worſhip, the diſcipline and government of the Lord's houſe,—to the maintenance of which theſe lands are ſolemnly ſworn, however they have "broken the "bands, and caſt away the cords." And the Lord's thus maintaining a teſtimony for him, while it is the butt of the malice of the generation, and Chriſt and his cauſe eſpouſed by a remnant—is a "ſign that is "ſpoken againſt:" this is a ſign that the Lord is loath to give us up, and a token for good that he will keep by the land; that he "will turn again, "and have compaſſion upon us,"—though "notwith-"ſtanding the land ſhould be deſolate, becauſe of "them that dwell therein, for the fruit of our doings."

5. HENCE ſee ground for exhortation, both to them that are deſtitute of the truth, and to the well-wiſhers of truth.

1. As to the first,—we exhort such to seek acquaintance with Christ, who is "the way, the truth, "and the life;" for if ye have not acquaintance with him, you but live in error, and must go down "to "the grave with a lie in your right hand." We exhort you to believe the truth of the threatenings of the law, wherein God is speaking awfully to you; so as to fly into Christ, in whom you will see the truth of these threatenings evidently manifested, in their having been executed upon him, as the Surety of the covenant, to the full. Believe the truth of God's words of grace and promise in the everlasting gospel, which are published to you, as a ground for your faith and hope. By rejecting the grace of God, and misbelieving his record, his words of promise, which are "to you, and to your children;" you will come to know, to your sad experience, the truth of his awful threatenings; as you must lie under the curse of a broken covenant eternally: "He that believeth not, "shall be damned." O then believe this truth, that "thou hast destroyed thyself;" that thou canst not help thyself; that all the creation of God cannot help thee. Believe this truth, that God hath "given "his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in "him, should not perish, but have everlasting life:" that he "hath given to you," in the word of salvation, "eternal life; and this life is in his Son." Mint, in a dependence upon the grace that is in the promise, at receiving an offered Christ; and resting upon him alone for salvation, as he is fully and freely offered to you in the gospel.

2. As to them that are well-wishers to truth; we would exhort such, (1.) To seek to know more and more of the power of divine truth believed, for the cleansing and purifying of your hearts and conver-

sations. Many " hold the truth in unrighteous-
" ness :" they have the truth in their understandings, by a head-knowledge of it; but it is incarcerate there: it is held and detained there, as in a prison, encompassed with a guard of corrupt affections; that it has not entrance into the heart; and so has no influence for changing the heart and conversation. The truth received into the heart, will have a purifying, a sanctifying efficacy thereupon: " Sanctify them " through thy truth; thy word is truth," John xvii. 17. And this will appear in the life, by a " walk-
" ing in the truth;" and so commending religion to others, bringing up a good report of Christ and his cause, to your neighbours about you. " Let your " light so shine before men, as others seeing your " good works, may glorify your father which is in " heaven." (2.) We exhort you to be valiant in your stations for the truth. You are called to assemble about the standard of Zion's King, to appear for Christ and his cause; putting in your mite for keeping up his remembrance, and transmitting to posterity a testimony for the truths of Christ. " Stand " fast in the faith; quit you like men; be strong," 1 Cor. xvi. 13. (3.) Keep your eye upon the great Standard-bearer, the Lord-Christ, the " Captain of " the Lord's hosts;" who appears " with his sword " drawn in his hand:" who is possessed of infinite wisdom to direct his army, and of infinite power to protect them; and will undoubtedly bring them off the field victorious; yea, more than conquerors, over their inward enemies,——the corruptions of their hearts, and all their outward oppofers, when once their " warfare is accomplished." Many err, in looking more to them that are about the standard, than to the standard itself, and the glorious Standard-bearer: but let your eyes be directed this way, and thus

will you be animated and encouraged to appear for his cauſe.——And let it be your concern to be found with Chriſt, and about his ſtandard, though all were to forſake him but yourſelves. (4.) Pray for the advancement of Chriſt's intereſts, for the ſupporting of the banner given to be diſplayed becauſe of the truth. "Prayer ſhall be made for him," Pſal. lxxii. 15. Pray for them that are called, in an eminent manner, to diſplay the banner. "Brethren, "pray for us. Pray for the peace of Jeruſalem." Pray for a witneſſing ſynod, that the Lord may "reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth," and may unite them to one another in the truth: that the promiſe may be accompliſhed, "Thy watchmen "ſhall lift up the voice; with the voice together ſhall "they ſing; for they ſhall ſee eye to eye, when the "Lord ſhall bring again Zion," Iſ. lii. 8. (5.) Sing both of mercy and judgment. We have ground to ſing of judgment, in reſpect of what the Lord has been juſtly provoked to. We may join with the church in the context here, "Thou haſt caſt us off; "thou haſt ſcattered us; thou haſt been diſpleaſed: "thou haſt made the earth to tremble; thou haſt "broken it. Thou haſt ſhewed thy people hard "things; thou haſt made us to drink the wine of aſtoniſhment." But, at the ſame time, we are to bleſs God for undeſerved mercy, in the midſt of deſerved wrath, in ſtill maintaining his cauſe; and ſo to ſing of mercy as well as judgment, in a way of acknowledging to his praiſe;——"Thou haſt given a "banner to them that fear thee, that it may be diſ"played becauſe of the truth. Selah."

MERCY and JUDGMENT displayed in the Effects of a Gospel-ministry.

A

SERMON preached at the opening of the Associate Synod, at Edinburgh, April 22. 1766.

ISAIAH viii. 16.

Bind up the Testimony, seal the Law among my disciples.

WHILE judgments were impending upon the Jews, the Lord warns the prophet Isaiah, and by him his people, against the fear of man, which causeth a snare, verf. 12. of this chapter; and propofes to them the fear of God, as an antidote against this sinful fear of man, verf. 13. "Sanctify the "Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, "and let him be your dread." The unspeakable advantage that accrues to the fearers of his name, is propofed as a motive to inforce the exhortation, verf. 14. "And he shall be for a sanctuary;" a place of refuge and defence, where his people shall be safe in the greatest dangers. But withal, the more to enforce this duty, the dreadful issue of unbelief in not fearing God, and not taking up with him as their sanctuary, is set before them in a clear light; in the following part of verf. 14. and in verf. 15.: for, through their unbelief, he would prove "for a "stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, for "a gin, and for a snare;" so that "many among "them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be "snared, and be taken." The apostle Peter, 1 epist.

ii. 8. cites this ſcripture, and applies it to Chriſt; and ſo teaches us, that the Lord Chriſt is that JEHOVAH, the Lord of hoſts, who is ſpoken of here, whom we are to ſanctify, to make our fear and our dread; who will be for a ſanctuary to all that believe in him: but occaſionally, through mens unbelief and diſobedience,—a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence, to all rejecters of him; ſo as they fall more dreadfully, than if Chriſt and the goſpel had never been brought near to them. Such as fall on this ſtone muſt undoubtedly be broken: and as to all ſuch as are not recovered from their fall, this ſtone will fall upon them, and grind them to powder.

LIFE and death being thus ſet before them, the bleſſing and the curſe; then comes in our text, delivered in the form of a command to the prophet; "Bind up the teſtimony, ſeal the law among my "diſciples." Various opinions have been embraced as to the meaning of theſe words: but that we may, in a dependence upon the Spirit of truth, find out his meaning in this paſſage, let us take ſome particular view thereof. We may notice,

1. THE Speaker here; and that is the LORD OF HOSTS, the Lord Chriſt, as appears from the preceding context, expreſsly applied to him in the New Teſtament: and alſo what is ſaid, verſ. 18. "Behold, "I and the children, which God hath given me," is applied to Chriſt, Heb. ii. 13. It was he that, by his Spirit, ſpake to the prophets; and it was from him they had their commiſſion.

2. To whom this infinite perſon ſpeaks; to the prophet Iſaiah immediately: but as what was written aforetime, was written for our learning; we may

consider it as not only spoken to him, but also to the ministers and servants of Christ in after-times in like circumstances.

3. WHAT he speaks about; the *testimony* and the *law*. These words seem to point out one and the same thing: and may be understood, not only as pointing out what God revealed to this prophet concerning his way with this people; the coming of the Messiah; and setting up his kingdom in the world; nor only the Old Testament, called the *Law and the Testimony*, verse 20. as then the New-Testament dispensation had not taken place: for though these may be more immediately understood, yet we conceive, as the words have a respect to after-times as well as the days of this prophet, or the days of the Old-Testament church; that they may be understood of the whole of the doctrine of Christ, as handed down to us in the whole Bible, in the Old and New Testament. The word of God, in the scriptures of truth, is God's *testimony* to us concerning his mind and will; and such a testimony as has a binding power upon us, obliging us to faith and obedience; and so it is both a *testimony* and a *law*. And especially they may be understood of the gospel of the grace of God, which is called a *testimony*, John iii. 32. 33.: and sometimes (though, when law and gospel are strictly taken, they are opposed) it is called a *law*, as Is. ii. 3. "Out of Zion shall go forth the "law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

4. THERE is here a commission given, or a command delivered to the prophet, of *binding up* this testimony, and *sealing* this law. It must be inquired, What may be intended by this binding up and sealing? Binding up sometimes denotes the safety of a thing,

as 1 Sam. xxv. 29. Abigail says to David, "The "soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of "life with the Lord thy God:" it should thus be safe. Again, binding up, may denote a thing's being hid and secreted: and some think this is so expressed in allusion to merchants; who, after they have exposed their goods, bind them up, and put them out of sight, when the market is over.——*Sealing* sometimes denotes a thing being made sure, Matth. xxvii. 66. "They made the sepulchre sure, sealing the "stone." And when applied to writs, it points out their being established and confirmed: thus Ahasuerus' decrees, we read of in Esther, were "sealed with the "king's ring." Sealing also sometimes holds forth a thing being hid. Thus the book (Rev. v.) in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, was "seal-"ed with seven seals." It is usual among men, when they have wrote, to seal their letters, that what is contained in them, may be kept hid till the seal be opened. Finally, *sealing*, when applied to the word of God, sometimes signifies the gracious and abiding impression the word makes upon those whom the Lord deals savingly with, through the operation of the divine Spirit accompanying the ministry thereof, Job xxxiii. 16. "Then openeth he the ears of men, "and sealeth their instruction." And so believers are said to be sealed, by the efficiency of the Spirit, and instrumentality of the word, 2 Cor. i. 22. "who "hath also sealed us." Though we do not exclude from the meaning of the text, the testimony and law its being confirmed and made sure, having instamped upon it the seal of divine authority, on account of which it is to be believed and obeyed; and its being kept safe, to be transmitted pure from generation to generation; for it is written for the generations to come: yet we conceive, that God's hiding the testi-

mony and law from some, and revealing and powerfully applying it to others, are the things chiefly intended here. And either both these may be pointed out in both expressions in the text, "Bind up the testimony" from the rejecters of the Lord's message; but bind it up, hide it, or lay it up as a treasure among my disciples; let it be hid in their hearts: seal the law from unbelievers; but seal it upon and among my disciples. Or rather, the dispensation of righteous judgment may be held forth in the first clause, "Bind up the testimony;" and the gracious dispensation in the second, "Seal the law among my "disciples."

But it may be proper to observe here, that these words neither carry in them, on the one hand, that the good fruit and efficacy of the labours of Christ's servants depend upon them; they are only the instruments in the Lord's hand, of this sealing-work among disciples: nor on the other hand, that this binding up and hiding of the testimony is the proper end of their ministry, or an issue that they are to desire. For they are sent to open mens eyes, and turn them from darkness to light; and are earnestly to wish for the salvation of their hearers: but through mens unbelief and obstinacy, the word that is appointed for their illumination and salvation, may prove the occasion of blinding and hardening them; and the Lord may be provoked to give this awful commission, "Bind up the testimony; make the heart "of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and shut "their eyes," &c. It is then as if the Lord had said to the prophet,—Go on in the faithful discharge of thy office, declaring the testimony and the law: and the effect shall be, that, as to unbelievers and rejecters of thy message, the testimony

shall be bound up and hid from them; but as to my people, the law shall be sealed among them, to their spiritual benefit and everlasting salvation: both which shall redound to my glory.

5. THE character of them among whom the law is sealed; my disciples, my scholars, those that learn of me: they shall profit by these doctrines, and by that ministry, by which others are more and more blinded and hardened. And this implies the character of these, on the other hand, from whom the testimony is bound up: they are such as will not come to Christ's school, nor submit to his instructions.

THIS scripture, as thus explained, was verified as to the ministry of the prophets of old, Is. vi. 9. 10. It had a special accomplishment, in the effects of Christ's personal ministry on earth; as appears from Is. xl. 4, and John ix. 39. This was also the case, as to the ministry of his apostles, 2 Cor. ii. 15. 16. But what was written aforetime, was written for our learning: and both scripture and experience shew, that this is also the case with the ministry of Christ's servants, since the canon of the scripture was completed. We take the scope of the text to be to this purpose, *viz.*

"THAT while the ministers of Christ do, through divine assistance, faithfully discharge their trust, in declaring his testimony and his law in Zion; the Lord sovereignly makes their ministrations to turn out to a binding up the *testimony* from many, in a way of righteous judgment; and to a sealing the law upon and among others, in a way of grace and mercy: "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples."

As this subject so nearly concerns us who are ministers, as well as the people; it may not be improper to dwell a little upon it on this occasion: by taking a more particular view,

I. Of this *testimony* and *law*, which the ministers of Christ are to declare in Zion; and observe some things as to their declaring of the same.

II. Of this awful, but righteous dispensation, of *binding up* the testimony, even by their ministrations.

III. Of this gracious dispensation, of *sealing* the law among Christ's disciples, by the same ministry. And we may,

IV. Subjoin some improvement of what may be offered. All as the Lord may be pleased to direct and assist. We return then,

I. To take a view of this *testimony* and *law*, which Christ's ministers are to declare in Zion; and to say something as to their declaring of the same.

1. This testimony and law, which the ministers of Christ are to declare in Zion, contains all things that God has seen meet to reveal concerning himself and his will, and that are necessary for us to know and practise.—We cannot propose, at present, to point out even all the great lines of the volume of God's book. He therein reveals, not only that he is, but what he is in his nature and perfections; and that, in the one Godhead, there are three distinct Persons,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, 1 John v. 7. He therein reveals his eternal purposes, as far as he has seen meet to make them known: particularly, as to the election of some of his fallen creatures to everlasting life; and the reprobation of others. He plainly makes known man's primitive integrity,

being created after the image of God; and that a proper covenant was made with Adam, in his upright state, as a public person and federal head to his posterity; wherein life was promised to him and his seed upon condition of his obedience; and death threatened in case of disobedience, Gen. ii. 16. 17. Rom. v. 12. The cavils of corrupt men, against this doctrine, are very unreasonable; if it be considered, that Adam was every way capable to fulfil the condition proposed: that his own interest was as much at the stake as that of his posterity; and so their concerns as safe in his hand, who was their common parent, as they could have been in their own: and that if he had stood till his probation had been finished, his posterity were to reap unspeakable advantage; and would, no doubt, have all admired this plan of divine wisdom. But what is sufficient for our believing this doctrine, whoever oppose it, is, that it is revealed in this testimony and law. He therein makes known man's fall, by the breach of this covenant, Gen iii. 6. Rom. v. 12. and his utter inability to recover himself out of this state of sin and misery into which he is fallen; as he can neither fulfil the law, nor satisfy the justice of God. He therein reveals the mystery of redemption, by our Lord Jesus Christ. He makes known that eternal transaction, that council of peace, which was between them both; that covenant of grace, which is ordered in all things and sure. He reveals the undertaking of the eternal Son of God in that council of peace, in the room of an elect world, as their Surety, Psal. xl. 6. Prov. viii 23. 24.; the mysterious constitution of his person, as EMMANUEL, God-man; for as he was God by nature, God from eternity, he voluntarily became man, and so is God and Man in two distinct natures and one Person: his investiture with all saving offices; as the Prophet,

Priest, and King of his church: his bringing in everlasting righteousness, by a true and proper satisfaction in his obedience and sufferings, as substitute in the law-room and stead of an elect world. He reveals the mystery of the application of this redemption by the Spirit; in the effectual calling, justification, sanctification, and glorification of such as were ordained to eternal life: which application of redemption is begun and carried on by the means of the gospel, wherein Christ is freely gifted and offered to all without exception; as the appointed mean of gathering in those whom he hath chosen.—Therein he makes known the nature and constitution of his church upon earth; commanding his ministers to shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may measure the pattern. He makes known what are the doctrines to be believed; the ordinances of worship to be observed; to which nothing is to be added, and from which nothing is to be taken away;——God's Servant having dealt prudently in the institution of these ordinances. And also, he points out therein the government appointed in his house; which is not left ambulatory, else Christ were not so faithful as a Son, as Moses was as a servant; and the New-Testament church were at no small loss by Christ's coming: and the government of the church must not be looked upon as a matter of little consequence; it is as necessary as a wall to a city, or a hedge to a vineyard. Therein he reveals and makes known the duties to be practised by church-members; comprehended in love to God through Christ, and love to one another. And so this law and testimony is a most perfect rule, yea, the only rule of faith and manners; and is every way worthy of its great Author, the supreme Lord and Law-giver.

2. This teſtimony and law is divine; it is the teſtimony of God and the law of God, Pſal. lxxviii. 5. He atteſts the truth of all that is therein revealed: "For there are three that bear record in heaven; the "Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and theſe "three are one:" and it is his authority which is interpoſed in this law; for the Lord is our Law-giver. There is a *Thus ſaith the Lord*, as it were, prefixed to every revelation of divine truth, and every precept of duty. So it has the ſtamp of divine authority upon it, of the authority of the God of heaven. Therefore,

3. This teſtimony and law demands our faith and obedience. A teſtimony is to be credited; and if we receive the teſtimony of men, the teſtimony of God is greater. This teſtimony is to be believed, merely upon the authority of him who bears teſtimony; and he that thus receives this teſtimony, hath ſet to his ſeal that God is true. This teſtimony is not of ſuch a nature, that men may believe it or not as they pleaſe: divine authority is therein interpoſed, which requires our aſſent; and he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar. And a law is to be obeyed, becauſe of the authority of the Law-giver: ſo is this law, becauſe of the authority of the one Law-giver, who is able to ſave and to deſtroy; who is the alone Lord of the conſcience, and has power to bind it. To ſtrike out againſt any thing he enjoins, is rebellion againſt the divine Majeſty of heaven; and ſurely "rebellion is as the ſin of witchcraft, and ſtub-"bornneſs is as iniquity and idolatry," 1 Sam. xv. 23.

4. This teſtimony and law is the only criterion by which we are to try either doctrines or practices: it is the unerring rule, the touchſtone, Iſ. viii. 20.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak "not according to this word, it is because there is no "light in them." We are not implicitly to believe what men say, nor approve what they do; however great their characters be. The Bereans are commended as more noble than those in Thessalonica, because they brought even the doctrine of the apostles to the touchstone of the word to be tried, Acts xvii. 11.; and John warns, to try the spirits whether they be of God. And while we judge by the word, in a dependence upon the Spirit, we cannot mistake: for it is more sure than a voice from heaven, 2 Pet. i. 19.

5. The Lord will have this testimony and law promulgated and declared by gospel-ministers in the church. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth; not that the scripture derives its authority from the church: but it is as a pillar, on which truth is as it were inscribed, for its preservation and promulgation, in allusion to the use of pillars of old; and as the basis or seat of truth, as, in the church, truth is to be found in its proper seat or place. And ministers are, as heralds, appointed to publish this testimony and law in Zion: "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, "O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace," Is. lxii. 6. "I have made thee a watchman unto "the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my "mouth, and give them warning from me," Ezek. iii. 17. "Son of man, shew the house to the house "of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their ini-"quities, and let them measure the pattern. And if "they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew "them the form of the house, and the fashion there-"of, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in "thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the or

" dinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all " the laws thereof: and write it in their sight, that " they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the " ordinances thereof, and do them," Ezek. xliii. 10. 11. Matth. xxvii. 19. 20. " Go teach all nations; " —teaching them to observe all things whatsoever " I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you al- " ways, even unto the end of the world. Amen." And they are faithfully and impartially to discharge this trust, without regarding mens feud or favour; that they may have it to say, with the apostle of the Gentiles, " we are pure from the blood of all men; " for we have not shunned to declare unto you all the " counsel of God."

6. This testimony and law, while faithfully published and declared in the church, will not fail of an effect to the glory of God. The word that goes out of his mouth, is as the rain that cometh down and the snow from heaven; which returneth not thither, but accomplisheth its end. It shall not return unto him void: it will either tend to mens salvation, or their greater condemnation: in both which God will be glorified. But this leads us,

II. To consider this awful, but righteous dispensation, of binding up the testimony, and that even as the effect of a gospel-ministry. And here it may be proper to observe,

1. That the testimony and law is hid from men, through their natural blindness, ignorance, and unbelief; and through the artifice of Satan, the god of this world, who blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them. And this way it is hid from

from all men, considered as to their natural state: for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the "Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually "discerned." And this natural blindness and ignorance is culpable, is our fault; because man brought it on himself, by his voluntary departure from God.

2. As there is a natural, so a contracted blindness, as to the great things contained in God's testimony and law; whereby they come to be further hid, and the testimony bound up: as well as there is a contracted hardness added to the natural, Zech. vii 12. "They made their hearts as an adamant-stone." We read of this contracted blindness, Mat. xiii. 15. Acts xxviii. 27. "For this peoples heart is waxed gross, "and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes "they have closed, lest at any time they should see "with their eyes." Men do actively blind themselves, when they bar out the light, and will not submit to the truth; because it may cross their prevailing inclination, and what to them seems to be their interest.

The men who sent Jeremiah to enquire of the Lord for them, professed to be lying open to light, and to be ready to be instructed, Jer. xlii. 1.—7. But we see, chap. xliii. 1.—8. when they heard the Lord's message, they barred out the light, and took their own way; and is not this the case with too many still? Also when men, through unaccountable carelessness and negligence, slight the means of the Lord's appointment, for attaining acquaintance with these things; they are blinding themselves, and have an active hand in binding up the testimony.

3. THERE is a judicial blinding of men, and hiding of these things from them; even a binding up the testimony by God himself, in a way of righteous judgment. Thus, as the blinding of men is attributed to themselves, as we have seen; so it is to God, John xii. 38. 39. 40. "He hath blinded their eyes, "and hardened their hearts, that they should not see "with their eyes," &c. Is. xxix. 10. 11. "The Lord "hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, "and hath closed your eyes: And the vision of all "is become to you as the words of a book that is seal-"ed." But mens hand, in blinding themselves, is most sinful; God's hand, in judicially blinding them, is most just and holy: for, as coming from God, it has the notion of a just punishment: and he is of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity, or look upon sin; far less can he approve it, or be the author of it. God judicially blinds men, and binds up the testimony, not by infusing into their minds any darkness or mistaken notions of divine things: but by with-holding that supernatural illumination, which is necessary to the saving uptaking of these things, and which he is not bound to give to any, being a debtor to none, except in so far as he has been graciously pleased to oblige himself by free promise; and by giving them up, in a way of righteous judgment, to their own ignorance, blindness, and hardness of heart; as a just punishment for their sins, particularly for their abuse of the means of knowledge. Thus he gave up the Gentiles, for their abusing what notices of God they had from the light of nature, Rom. i.; and thus were the Jews given up in Christ's day, and continue under that judgment to this day, Is. vi. compared with John xii. 39. 40. And alas! is not this the case with multitudes in these last days? But this judicial binding up the testimony may be considered, as it respects,

1. wicked men and reprobates: from whom God totally hides these things, as to any saving knowledge of them. Thus Mat. xi. 25. He is said to "hide "these things from the wise and prudent, and to re- "veal them unto babes." 2. The Lord's own people, those who have the root of the matter in them;—the Lord, in a way of contending with them for their transgressions, and especially for not improving and following light when he gives it, but giving up themselves to a detestable neutrality in his cause,—may be provoked to bind up the testimony from them, as to what is the present truth and duty of the day; and to leave them to wander sadly in the darkness of error, and to mistake their way. Aaron, the saint of God, made a calf; and the apostle supposes, that such as hold the foundation may build thereupon wood, hay, and stubble;—which, in the issue, shall be burnt, and the man suffer loss; yet he himself be saved, but so as by fire, 1 Cor. iii. 12. 15. Is not this sadly the case at this day: when many who, we have ground to think, belong to the Lord, are so bewildered; embracing Latitudinarian tenets, to the subversion of any testimony for the cause of Christ,—— and signalizing themselves, in opposition to a covenanted work of reformation, justly looked upon, in former days, as the glory of these lands?

4. This judicial blinding of men, and binding up the testimony, is, as to many, the effect of the ministry of Christ's servants. This may seem strange; while the proper end of sending ministers to publish this testimony and law, is the bringing men to the knowledge thereof, to their salvation: but, however strange, it is true. Many a precious soul splits upon the rock of salvation. As the same sun that makes flowers more fragrant, makes the dunghill more noi-

ſome; the ſame heat that melts wax, hardens clay: ſo the ſame Jeſus "is ſet for the fall and riſing again "of many in Iſrael," Luke ii. 34. The ſame word of reconciliation, that to ſome is "the ſavour of life "unto life," is to others "the ſavour of death unto "death," 2 Cor. ii. 16. The words of Chriſt's mouth, that prove quickening to ſome, prove killing to others, Iſ. xi. 4. Hoſ. vi. 5. And miniſters may be ſent with a goſpel-diſpenſation among a people, the proper tendency of which is to open their eyes; and yet have it in commiſſion from the Lord to "ſhut their eyes, and their ears, and to harden their "hearts, leſt they ſee with their eyes," &c. Iſ. vi. 6. 9. 10.; where, what we have ſeen aſcribed to people themſelves, as their heinous ſin, and to God, as a juſt and righteous judgment,——is aſcribed to the miniſtry of the prophet, as being ſome way inſtrumental in bringing about this judgment from the hand of God. But ſome may be ſaying, How can theſe things be? We anſwer, This is not the proper end and deſign of the miniſtry of the word; but to turn men from darkneſs to light, from the power of Satan unto God: yet, through mens corruption, it comes to have this effect, and to be the occaſion of their being blinded and hardened, Iſ. xxviii. 13. "The word of the "Lord was unto them precept upon precept,—that "they might go and fall backward, and be broken, "and ſnared, and taken." Chriſt himſelf ſays, John ix. 39. "For judgment I am come into this world; that "they which ſee not might ſee, and that they which "ſee might be made blind:" that theſe who think they ſee and excel others, may, through the juſt judgment of God, be ſo dazzled with the ſplendor of the light, as to become blind. While mens corruptions are not ſubdued by the grace of God, through the means of the word, they are more irritated and enra-

ged; and so they rebel against the light, and thus come to be more awfully blinded and hardened, and in the issue to receive a greater damnation: so that they fall backward, are broken, snared, and taken; —and the word of Christ proves to them a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. Such an issue of a gospel-ministry is very awful: and what, as we observed before, ministers are not to wish for, nor take pleasure in; seeing God takes not pleasure in the death of sinners. But they are, after Christ's example, to adore divine sovereignty, Matth. xi. 25. 26. and to rejoice that in all things God shall be glorified. But we have dwelt long enough on this melancholy part of our subject; let us now turn our eyes to the light side of the cloud, and,

III. Consider the merciful dispensation, in this gracious effect of a gospel-ministry, *the sealing the law among Christ's disciples.* Here we may observe these things,

1. The law may be said to be sealed among Christ's disciples, when they are brought, through the Spirit's operation, to know and believe it; to a certain persuasion of the truth of what is contained in God's word, so as to embrace and close with the truth. Though many things in it may be dark to them, yet they cannot but believe all that God says, upon the footing of his own testimony; and so they echo back to the law published from mount Zion, "These are the true sayings of God:"—and as to every article of divine truth, "This is a faithful saying;" this is to "set to the seal that God is true," John iii. 33. God's law is indeed most firm truth; and all that is contained in it is of the most undoubted certainty, whether we believe it or not, as having

the seal of God's authority stamped upon it: but it is when men are brought, disciple-like, to this believing persuasion of the truth, that it is sealed among them: as it is this sealing that is here spoken of, "Seal the law among my disciples."

2. THE law may be said to be sealed among his disciples, when the law, carried home with power upon their hearts, makes a deep, abiding, and transforming impression upon them. This will always be the case, where the forementioned believing persuasion of the truth is wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost. This is to "put his laws into their mind, "and write them in their hearts;" so as they are "the epistle of Christ, written, not with ink, but "with the Spirit of the living God;—not in tables "of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart," Heb. viii. 10. 2 Cor. iii. 3. And here we may more particularly notice,

(1.) A SEAL makes a deep and abiding impression upon the wax: so this is a thorough work upon the heart and soul, that cannot be defaced again, or erazed, by all the malice of hell and earth. The word, in respect of its abiding impression, is like "a nail "fastened in a sure place by the master of assem-"blies."

(2.) THE seal stamps upon the wax the very image of itself; so as there is an exact resemblance between the seal, and the impression made by it: so this sealing of the law stamps upon the soul the very image of God; a transcript of which we have in his word;—so as the new man, in the disciples of Christ, is renewed after the image of him that created him; and the law in the heart, and the law in the word,

answer to one another, as the seal and the impression made by it.

(3.) The seal distinguisheth the thing sealed from other things: so the disciples of Christ, upon whom the law is sealed, are, by this sealing, distinguished from all others, from the most refined hypocrites. "My sheep," says the great Shepherd, "hear my "voice, and I know them;" as being marked and distinguished by my word and Spirit. There is, indeed, a counterfeit of God's grace; there is a feigned faith, love and repentance: but they are quite different from the saving graces of the Spirit of God. The difference is not gradual, but specific: they are things of a quite different nature and kind.

(4.) Sealing sets things apart, and secures them from vicious intromission; so goods are sealed, that they may be secured to the lawful owner. Thus the Spirit, by the word sent home on the hearts of believers, seals them to the day of redemption, Eph. iv. 30.: they are, as it were, marked and set aside for the Lord's use; and to be possessors of the heavenly inheritance.

(5.) Sealing is for confirming, Jer. xxxii. 10. 11. "I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it:" so this sealing of the law on the hearts of disciples, when the Spirit graciously shines upon his own work in them, and discovers it to them, confirms them as to their interest in the heavenly inheritance; for thus the Spirit brings them to the sensible assurance of salvation, Eph. i. 13. "After that ye believed, ye were sealed "with that Holy Spirit of promise."

3. The law may be said to be sealed among

Christ's disciples, when, as the fruit of its being thus powerfully applied to their souls, they are brought to seal it dutifully. Their sealing it, indeed, does not add any thing to its intrinsic worth or certainty; yet the Lord may be said to seal the law among them, in leading them out to put their seal to it: and this may be done various ways. We shall not insist on their sealing it in a way of believing it, which is to set to the seal that God is true; of which before: and indeed, without this, all their sealing of it otherwise will be vain, as to any saving benefit to themselves, or gracious acceptance with God; for without faith it is impossible to please God. But here,

[1.] They are to set to their seal, by an open, faithful profession and confession of Christ and his truths. It is a law of the God of Zion, "Zion thy "God confess." The hundred and forty four thousand, with the Lamb on mount Zion, had his "Fa-"ther's name written in their foreheads," Rev. xiv. 1. Every one in their station, ministers, and other office-bearers of the church, in their station, and private Christians, in theirs, are to make this open and full profession of Christ's truths; and give in their testimony, as his witnesses, in opposition to all gainsayers: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I "am God," Is. xliii. 12. Men may talk of it as they will, as a matter of indifferency what be mens profession, if they be good Christians, as they say: but we are sure that there is no such doctrine taught in the law and testimony. A holy profession is enjoined, as well as a holy conversation; and corruption in principle is found to introduce corruption in practice. Whether they deserve the name of good Christians, who can speak lightly of any of the truths of Christ; or at least whether, in so doing, they are

acting as such, let the law and the testimony judge. But,

[2.] THEY are to set to their seal by a holy conversation, confirming the genuineness of their profession. To keep the garments clean, to have a well-ordered conversation, a conversation that manifests a regard to both tables of the law, and wherein every duty has a place, and its own proper place,—adorns the doctrine of God our Saviour, and proves sealing and confirming to others about them; yea, sometimes winning to their adversaries. Thus the law written on their hearts, is, as it were, wrote over again in their lives and practice, copying after Christ: "For "he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also "so to walk, even as he walked," 1 John. ii. 6.

[3.] THEY may be called to seal it with their oath. It is usual enough among men, as to matters of weight, particularly, when they become matters of controversy, for witnesses to seal their testimony with an oath; "and an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife," Heb. vi. 6. 16. And not only are Christ's disciples called to seal his testimony and law, in partaking of baptism and the Lord's supper, the seals of the covenant of grace under the New Testament, which imply a solemn oath; but they may be called, upon proper occasions, to a formal and explicit avouching of the Lord to be their God, and devoting of themselves to him to be his people;—swearing, by the great name of the Lord, that they approve of, and, through grace, will adhere to his truths and cause. There are many promises in the Old Testament, as Is. xix. 18. 21. and xliv. 3. 5. and xlv. 23. *&c.* which undoubtedly look to New-Testament times; and point this forth as a duty, in these days, to be practised.

They cannot be underſtood only of the ſolemn profeſſion that is made, in the receiving of baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper: for though no doubt an oath is implied in theſe, yet the expreſſions "they ſhall ſwear "to the Lord of hoſts, ſhall vow a vow to the Lord; "one ſhall ſay, I am the Lord's, another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand to the Lord," *&c.* muſt refer to a formal explicit ſwearing by the great name of the Lord; or elſe we may wreſt the ſcripture to any meaning we pleaſe. No words can be conceived more plain and expreſs to the purpoſe than thoſe of the prophet. Beſides, the Old-Teſtament church had ſeals of the ſame covenant of graee, for ſubſtance the ſame with thoſe under the New; yet to theſe they were called, on certain occaſions, to ſuperadd this ſolemn act of expreſs ſwearing. Why then ſhould it be pled, that no more is intended by theſe expreſſions, as they refer to New-Teſtament days, than a profeſſion of Chriſt, and ſubmitting to his ordinances, particularly a partaking of the ſeals of the covenant; ſeeing it is evident, that theſe expreſſions meant ſomething further in the days of the prophets? Neither can it be ſaid, with any reaſon, that theſe are only promiſes of New-Teſtament worſhip in the Old-Teſtament ſtile; and ſo not literally to be underſtood of religious ſwearing. For though we grant that ſuch promiſes are to be found in the Old Teſtament, as in Iſ. xix. 19. 21. there is a promiſe of an *altar* and a *ſacrifice;* yet the ſcripture plainly ſhews us what was typified and prefigured by theſe, and ſo affords us an explication of ſuch promiſes: but what was the antitype of religious ſwearing, we ſuppoſe the adverſaries of this work themſelves cannot ſhew. Beſides, this duty is not any ways ceremonial, but moral in its nature; and moral duties are binding under every diſpenſation. It is required in the firſt and third commandments, as they

are explained in our Larger Catechism: and it is strange that any, who profess an adherence to our excellent standards, should stand on the other side.

THERE are not wanting arguments from the New Testament also; particularly, we may argue from 2 Cor. viii. 5. This place cannot be understood merely of a professed subjection to Christ, in submitting to the ordinances of word and sacraments; for this could be no more than the apostles expected from a church: "But this they did, not as we hoped," says he, "but first gave their ownselves to the "Lord." Nor can it be meant only of devoting a part of their substance to the use of the poor saints; for this is otherwise expressly spoken of in the context: and here the manner in which they proceeded is set forth; first in order dedicating themselves to the Lord, and then their substance. Here surely is covenanting as to the matter of it. And as to the manner of it, in swearing by the name of the Lord, this is plain from other places of scripture. It is strange, that such as allow the warrantableness of an oath under the New Testament, in a matter of weight and controversy, and that it is a solemn act of religious worship,—should deny it to be warrantable, in a matter of such weight as God's eternal truth, and where the controversy is between God and Baal. There being no express precept for it in so many words in the New Testament, will never conclude against a moral duty; while the whole testimony and law is the rule of our faith and practice: and God has seen meet, for holy ends, thus to leave occasion to men of corrupt minds to pervert the truth. But, by the same argument, other doctrines of our holy religion, which the opposers of this profess adherence to, would fall to the ground. Much

more might be said on this subject; but it would not be proper to insist further on the present occasion.

[4.] Ministers are to set to their seal to the law, by doctrinally giving in their testimony to all the points and articles of it; keeping nothing back of the counsel of God: and church-judicatures, judicially testifying against errors and immoralities, asserting the truths of Christ, especially when controverted and opposed, and censuring the erroneous and scandalous,—are to set to their seal to this law, like Christ's disciples.

[5.] Disciples may be called to seal it with their blood, by suffering for the cause of Christ. We have not yet resisted unto blood: but thus has a testimony for the truths of Christ been handed down to us in these lands, a testimony for a covenanted work of reformation; which calls for our notice. For though indeed it is not mens testimony that we are to found our faith upon; it must not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God: yet no opinion should be embraced, unless clearly made out from the word of God, that imports that our worthy forefathers, who had evidently such a share of the divine countenance in their sufferings, died as fools die: and I am sure that this is the plain import of the Latitudinarian principles, which are abounding among professors at this day. We proceed to observe,

4. The law may be said to be sealed among Christ's disciples, when the Lord preserves it among them, and keeps it pure, in spite of all efforts from Satan; from vile heretics and wicked persecutors, his agents and instruments. He has committed it as a sacred,

depositum to the church; and there is a remarkable hand of Providence to be seen in preserving it in the church, and handing it down pure from one generation to another. For it is "written for the gene-"ration to come; and the people, which shall be cre-"ated, shall praise the Lord."

5. THIS sealing of the law, which we have been speaking of in the preceding particulars, is brought about by the ministry of Christ's servants. Hence he says to them, "Seal the law among my disci-"ples." (1.) This is the mean of begetting faith in the heart. Hence the gospel is called the "word "of faith which we preach:" and the apostle says, "Faith cometh by hearing." (2.) It is the instrument of regeneration and sanctification, Jam. i. 18. John xvii. 17. It is by this that the law is written on their hearts, and the image of God stamped upon them; as an instrument in the hand of the divine Spirit. (3.) And so it is the mean of bringing, through the Lord's blessing, to the profession and obedience of this testimony and law, from the faith of it in the heart, Rom. x. 9. 10. 17. compared. (4.) This ministry is the mean of preserving the doctrines of Christ from being perverted, while they are doctrinally and judicially declared and defended. But our time does not allow us to enlarge on these things: we therefore proceed,

IV. To make some short improvement of what has been said; which may be done, in addressing ourselves to some sorts of persons.

1. THERE is here a foundation for addressing the ministers of Christ, to whom this text particularly looks: "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among

"my disciples." Let me use the freedom then to direct myself to my brethren in the ministry in a few words; desiring to take the same exhortations to myself.

FATHERS and BRETHREN,

WE are placed in a very high and eminent station; being the heralds of the King of Zion, embassadors for God. We are called to a very weighty, though honourable work; to publish God's law and testimony. The issue of our labours, while helped to a faithful discharge of our trust, is very important and momentous; while they must prove either the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death, to those we minister among;—either a binding up the testimony from them, or a sealing the law among them. In our place and calling, we are exposed to various snares and temptations; from the frowns and flatteries of Satan and the world without, and from the deceitful workings of unbelief and other corruptions within. Let us then be concerned,

(1.) To make sure of being Christ's disciples ourselves; and to have experience of this testimony and law being sealed home upon our hearts, while we declare it to others. Though one, in a state of nature, may be called to the work of the ministry; yet it is a most heartless thing to preach an unknown Christ. It is an awful issue, for such as preach Christ to others, to be cast away themselves. A master in Israel ignorant of the new birth, a man of God without God in the world, a minister of Christ in league with Satan,—is a shocking absurdity. Graceless ministers are not likely to be instruments of doing much good to souls, whatever the Lord may do in a way of sovereignty. It is good when ministers can say,

" that which we have seen and heard declare we un-
" to you:" and these things write we, speak we unto you, that ye " may have fellowship with us; and " truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with " his Son Jesus Christ."

(2.) LET us be concerned to be well acquainted with, and to study much this testimony and law; the scriptures of truth, and the truths therein contained. It was the commendation of Apollos, Acts xviii. 24. that he was " mighty in the scriptures;" and of Timothy, that " from a child he had known " the scriptures." There are other branches of knowledge that are useful, and in their own place necessary: but it is in this respect they are so, as they conduce to our further acquaintance with this testimony and law; and therefore the volume of God's book is to be our chief study. The command looks to us in a particular manner, " Search the scrip-
" tures; for—they are they which testify of me."

(3.) LET us study, through grace, a faithful discharge of our trust; to fulfil our ministry, which we have received of the Lord. Let ut doctrinally declare all God's testimony and law; keeping back nothing to gain mens favour, or for fear of their displeasure. Our commission is, to teach them " to
" observe all things whatsoever Christ has command-
" ed us." Paul could say, " I have not shunned to
" declare unto you all the counsel of God." And if we seek to please men, we are not the servants of Christ. Particularly, we are, in this respect, faithfully to testify against present errors and defections; and appear for whatever is the present truth, the word of Christ's patience: and, as watchmen, to sound an alarm to our people; when we see danger ap-

proaching, error and defection creeping in, or judgments impending. "For if the trumpet give an "uncertain ſound, who ſhall prepare himſelf to the "battle?" We are alſo to deliver our meſſage with plainneſs and ſimplicity; not uſing the enticing words of man's wiſdom, or ſeeking to diſtinguiſh ourſelves by politeneſs of ſtile and expreſſion, or by adorning the truths of Chriſt with human oratory. The ſimplicity of the goſpel is its beauty; and to depart from the ſcripture ſtile, or to ſeek to adorn goſpel-truths by human art, proves, inſtead of adorning, to be a marring of their beauty: it is like gilding a diamond, or wrapping a cloth about the edge of a ſword,—which ſpoils the luſtre of the one, and blunts the edge of the other. And judicially, we muſt be concerned faithfully to condemn error and defection; to aſſert the truth, and to cenſure the erroneous and ſcandalous: and in all to act ſo, as it may be ſaid to each in the iſſue,——"Well done, thou good and "faithful ſervant."

(4.) In all this, we ſhould be concerned to have a ſingle eye to the glory of God and the good of ſouls. Miniſters, above all, ſhould have the eye ſingle. To them to live ſhould be Chriſt, and his increaſing the fulfilling of their joy. And they are to travail as in birth, till Chriſt be formed in ſouls; and to count all their pains and toil well beſtowed, if they be inſtrumental of but gaining one ſoul to Chriſt.

(5.) Let us have our eye to the Lord himſelf, for ſucceſs in our miniſtrations. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is "God that giveth the "increaſe." The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God. His bleſſing can make weak means effectual for accompliſhing great ends. By

faith, the walls of Jericho fell down at the blowing of rams horns. We are but as tools, and can do nothing but as employed by the great and skilful Worker.

(6.) As to the melancholy issue of our labours with many, in binding up the testimony, and their proving the savour of death unto death; let us, after Christ's example, adore divine sovereignty, Matth. xi. 25.; and let us be deeply affected with the ruin of immortal souls, and, at the same time, rejoice that God shall be glorified; "for we are unto God a "sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and "in them that perish."

(7.) Let us depend on the Lord for strength to carry us through in our work and warfare. He sends none out on their own charges. He backs our commission with,—"Lo, I am with you alway, "even unto the end of the world. Amen," "Be "strong," says he, "and work; for I am with you, "saith the Lord of hosts." When he sends us forth then with such a commission,— "Bind up the te- "stimony, seal the law among my disciples:" let our answer be,— "We will go in the strength of "the Lord God;" we "will make mention of thy "righteousness, even of thine only."

2. We may direct ourselves to such as have not the saving knowledge of this testimony and law.

(1.) Consider what a melancholy state and condition ye are in: ye are in darkness, under the power of spiritual blindness; under the power of Satan, the prince of darkness; without Christ, without God, without hope in the world.

(2.) CONSIDER that, while the gospel proves not the mean of enlightening and renewing you, you will be the more blinded and hardened under it. It will not return empty; but either tend to your salvation, or greater condemnation.

(3.) CONSIDER that by and by, if mercy prevent not,—these things which belong to your peace will be hid from your eyes, Luke xix. 42. They may come to be so, through the Lord's depriving you of the gospel; removing the candlestic out of its place, as he did with the Jews: or through the Lord's judicially giving you up to blindness and hardness of heart: saying, My Spirit shall no more strive with that man; saying to conscience, to ordinances, and providences,—Let him alone: saying to ministers, "Bind up the testimony;"—shut his eyes; make his heart fat: and this is a more awful judgment on a person or people, than sword, famine, or pestilence. And they may be hid by death; after which there is no place for repentance, though one sought it carefully with tears. Therefore,

(4.) BE concerned to improve the day of your merciful visitation; and to cry to God, through Christ,—that he may lighten your eyes, lest you sleep the sleep of death; that he may open your eyes, to see wonders out of his law: to which the promise may encourage you,—"In that day the eyes of the "blind shall see out of obscurity and out of dark-"ness."

3. WE may direct ourselves to such as have the law sealed upon them and among them, as Christ's disciples.

(1.) ADORE the freedom and sovereignty of God's grace, who has so singled you out; and give him all the glory. It is by the grace of God you are what you are.

(2.) CLEAVE to the Lord with purpose of heart; and beware of barring out light, as to any part of the Lord's cause and testimony. This dishonours the Lord, and provokes him to hide these things from you,—and so to deny you the honour of faithfully appearing for him, in a perverse and crooked generation; and may bring upon you heavy fatherly strokes. For though he pardon his people, he will take vengeance of their inventions.

(3.) Walk as them that are so highly privileged: "Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ."

(4) Brethren, pray for us, and the success of our ministry.

(5.) Pity them from whom the testimony is bound up, and the law sealed. This certainly becomes disciples.

4. WE exhort all in general,

(1.) To prize a gospel-dispensation: it is the ministration of righteousness for the justification, and the ministration of the Spirit for the sanctification of sinners. It is a light shining in a dark place; it is the word of life; it ought therefore to be much prized.

(2.) To improve it,—while it is said, "To-day "if ye will hear his voice." The improvement of

it, by faith's closing with Christ for salvation, is the best way to manifest that we prize this our privilege.

(3.) To examine and try what effect the gospel has upon you; whether it be turning out, through the Lord's blessing, to your spiritual benefit: or if, in a way of righteous judgment, it be tending to your hurt; so as to be likely to turn out in the issue to your greater condemnation. For it will prove to be a certain truth, and it is the sum of all we have been saying,—that both mercy and judgment are displayed in the effects of a gospel-ministry; and either the one or the other will be made manifest, in the effect it comes to have upon every one under such a dispensation: seeing it is said by Christ, to those whom he sends forth to labour in his vineyard; "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among "my disciples."

FINIS.